University of Alberta

Undergraduate Academic Advising in Selected Faculties at the University of Alberta

by

Susan L. Bens

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

in

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled Undergraduate Academic Advising in Selected Faculties at the University of Alberta submitted by Susan Laura Bens in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Educational Administration.

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26 September 1995

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my best friends, my sisters,

Sarah Bens and Marlis Bens.

Their intelligence and great capacity for

love and laughter are a constant inspiration and joy.

Abstract

The major purpose of this research was to provide a detailed description of the organization and delivery of academic advising of undergraduate students in selected faculties at the University of Alberta. Another purpose was to obtain perceptions of the effectiveness of various structures and models in use. Data were collected from three faculties through interviews with 21 academic advisors and examination of pertinent faculty and university documents.

Findings of the study included description of the objectives, organization, delivery, and effectiveness of academic advising. The numerous objectives of academic advising ranged from the provision of specific academic information to the creation of a supportive learning environment. Organization of academic advising was similar in that each faculty housed an academic advising system and used both non-academic staff in a centralized office and faculty members in the departments as academic advisors. While the structures were similar, several differences in function and scope were noted.

The primary delivery model for academic advising in the faculties studied was reported to be "individual advising," the in-person exchange of information between a student and an academic advisor. Additional delivery models also in use were self-advising, advisor-led group advising, peer-led group advising, computer-assisted advising, and course advising.

Discussions of effectiveness centred on aspects of delivery and included suggestions for improvements. While most findings relating to the organization and delivery of academic advising were supported in the literature, the faculties exhibited few of the identified characteristics of effective advising or of developmental advising.

Recommendations were made for practice and for future research.

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Purpose of the Study

Academic advising of undergraduate students is an important service provided by higher education institutions. Access to and understanding of a wide variety of academic information is critical for student success. Students may require curricular information, interpretation of institutional regulations, career information, counselling for personal issues, or other forms of guidance in order to maximize the educational benefits available to them. Academic advising literature and studies of student satisfaction with advising indicate varying levels of attention given to this important student service.

The major purpose of this study was to provide a detailed description of the organization and delivery of academic advising of undergraduate students in selected faculties at the University of Alberta. Another purpose was to obtain perceptions of the effectiveness of the various structures and models in use.

The content of this chapter includes a description of the need for the study; the research questions; definitions of important terms; delimitations, assumptions, and limitations of the study; and an overview of the organization of the thesis.

Need for the Study

Frost (1991) stated that academic advising is an essential yet frequently ineffective part of the educational experience for many higher education students. She maintained that higher education institutions require manageable systems to support students as they progress through the curriculum toward completion of a credential. In Frost's opinion, students need "the support of an informed and

interested representative of the institution as they identify and work toward achieving their objectives for higher education" (p. 1).

Relevant to this aspect, Spicuzza (1992) cited many studies identifying student dissatisfaction with the advising process and with advisors (e.g., Andrews, Andrews, Long, & Henton, 1987; Arnold, Mares, & Calkins, 1986; Beasley-Fielstein, 1986; DeBard, 1987; Koerin, 1991). The University of Alberta has also found some dissatisfaction with academic advising services. The annually administered "Graduand Survey" showed that 24% of the 1993 respondents (n=1,086) provided a positive assessment of the advising that they had received, while 27% were neutral and 49% were negative. Dissatisfaction with academic advising was indicated by those students with specifically prescribed curricula as well as by those with greater choice in program design (University of Alberta Graduand Survey, 1993). Academic advising is considered a faculty responsibility at the University of Alberta although no formal statements in that regard were made in either the University of Alberta Calendar (1995a) or the General Faculties Council Manual (1994).

Further, Habley (1983, 1988, 1993) identified lack of attention in research to advising structures. It was his opinion that discussion of organizational structures had been avoided on the false premise that because each institution is unique, no transferability of the research exists. He also stated that confusion between organization and delivery had resulted in few successful attempts to distinguish between those who deliver academic advising and the organizational structure in which advising occurs. Habley (1983) suggested that future research on academic advising programs should include the collection of data identifying organizational structures employed, practical implications of organizational structures, assessment of effectiveness of each structure, and identification of organizational structures best suited to the context, people, and policies of

institutions. Voorhees (1990) added that more description of advisors, students as advisees, and advising techniques is needed.

Statement of Research Questions

The major research question of this study was as follows: How is academic advising organized and delivered to undergraduate students in selected faculties at the University of Alberta? In order to obtain information relevant to the major question, individuals involved in academic advising of undergraduate students in varying capacities in three faculties at the University of Alberta were interviewed and relevant documents from the three faculties and university were examined.

The specific research questions are stated below.

1. What are the objectives of academic advising?
2. How is academic advising organized?
   (a) What is the organizational context in which academic advising occurs?
   (b) What organizational structures are in place for academic advising?
3. How is academic advising delivered?
   (a) Who are the academic advisors and what is their expertise in academic advising?
   (b) How is the availability of academic advising communicated to students?
   (c) How do students access academic advising?
   (d) What specific procedures are in use for students experiencing academic difficulty?
   (e) What approaches do academic advisors take to the academic advising process?
   (f) What additional academic advising delivery models are in use?

4. What are the perceptions of effectiveness of academic advising?

   (a) What are the perceptions of effectiveness of the organization of academic advising?

   (b) What are the perceptions of effectiveness of the delivery of academic advising?

   (c) What suggestions can be made for improving current academic advising?

Definitions

For the purpose of this research, "academic advising" was defined as the guidance and approval provided by staff, faculty, students, computers, or documentation within a given faculty or department for the purposes of selection of courses, selection of major, academic program design, and other matters (including personal) pertaining to academic concerns of the undergraduate student. The "academic advisors" were those individuals identified by the department or faculty as possessing the necessary knowledge to provide academic advising as defined above.

Delimitations

In the interest of producing accurate, detailed data, within a specified time frame, the following delimitations were imposed on this study:

1. The study was restricted to three faculties demonstrating use of diverse organizational structures and/or delivery models of academic advising.

2. The study was restricted to three faculties using an organizational model or delivery model for academic advising which had been identified in the literature.

3. The study only included individuals actively involved in the delivery of academic advising as advisors or as coordinators, and did not include the perceptions or evaluations of students who received advice.

Assumptions

In the design of this study, the following assumptions were made:

1. Differences exist in the organizational structures and delivery models for academic advising at the University of Alberta.

2. Faculties and departments employ systems of academic advising unique to their organizational context, students, staff, and faculty members.

3. Individuals responsible for coordination of academic advising and advisors themselves within the selected faculties are able to accurately present information about the organization and delivery of academic advising.

Limitations

Limitations restricting the scope of this study include these matters:

1. Accuracy of the findings was limited to information obtained through the data supplied by academic advisors and the data obtained from relevant documents.

2. Respondents to the semi-structured interview were identified based on their knowledge and commitment to academic advising by the contact people in the faculties studied and were not necessarily representative.

3. The data applied only to the faculties involved in the study.

4. The findings are not generalizable to other departments, faculties, or institutions.

Organization of Thesis

The thesis contains seven chapters. This chapter provides an introduction to the study. Pertinent theoretical and research literature are examined in Chapter 2. Chapter 3 describes the research design, method used in selecting participants, the pilot study, and the collection, analysis and reporting of data. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 provide description and analyses of data in terms of organization, delivery, and effectiveness of academic advising. The final chapter includes a summary of the thesis, its conclusions, and some recommendations for theory and practice of

educational administration as they relate to the organization and delivery of academic advising and to future research.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This literature review focuses on the current writings in the area of academic advising with emphasis on six aspects: (a) a historical perspective of academic advising, (b) definitions of academic advising, (c) organization of academic advising, (d) delivery of academic advising, (e) evaluation of academic advising, and (f) effectiveness of academic advising.

Historical Perspective of Academic Advising

According to Rudolph (1962), academic advising began as a faculty responsibility to help students make appropriate course selections from the increasingly complex curriculum that evolved in higher education at the end of the nineteenth century. Goetz (1988) stated that prior to this time academic programs were highly structured, curricular choices limited, and enrollments small. As society's need for educated people grew, colleges and universities broadened their curricula and widened their bases of enrollment. With more course offerings and choices for programs of study, greater diversity of students, and increased faculty specialization, academic advising became a visible need (Goetz, 1988). Today, academic advising has taken on increased importance as a necessary part of institutional operations and as a contributor to student persistence and success.

Definitions of Academic Advising

The literature presents slightly varying definitions of academic advising and interpretations of the responsibilities and roles of advisors. Several of these are provided in this section.

Goetz (1988) defined academic advising as the act of "providing students with guidance in identifying and developing suitable programs of study using the curricular structure of the institution . . . the breadth of this activity is dependent on many institutional factors, such as curricular complexity, enrolment configurations, procedural organization, and staffing operations" (p. 21). The selection of courses for a specific program of study was identified by Schneider (1977) as the most narrow purpose of academic advising. In agreement with Schneider, Gordon (1992) defined academic advising in a context beyond the simple exchange of curricular information and included the tasks of interpreting institutional procedures, providing career information, counselling students about adjustment concerns, and helping students make many kinds of adjustment decisions. A broader definition of academic advising was provided by Grites (1979) who described it as "assisting students to realize the maximum educational benefits available to them by helping them to better understand themselves and to learn to use the resources of an educational institution to meet their special educational needs and aspirations" (p. 1).

Crookston (1972) pointed out that academic advising can be either "prescriptive" or "developmental." The traditional "prescriptive approach" was described as a relationship in which the academic advisor is viewed as the authority, and the student simply acts on the advisor's advice. Crookston described a "developmental approach" as a relationship where the academic advisor is an instructor, growth facilitator, resource person, and friend to the student. "Developmental academic advising" was described by Winston et al. (1984) as (a) a teaching-learning activity, (b) a way to stimulate personal and intellectual growth, (c) a support function, and (d) a record-keeping function. Voorhees (1990) added that developmental academic advising seeks to utilize adult

development theories to create advising environments conducive to students' academic and personal growth.

Although the scope of academic advising has broadened to include more than curricular choice, a fundamental task of the student remains to be to decide the most appropriate direction to take in planning a program of study. Goetz (1988) recognized that "academic advising is intimately tied to the curriculum, both in the general education components . . . and the specialization" (p. 20). Grites (1979) agreed that "the most significant guide in academic advising is still the curriculum" (p. 30).

A comprehensive definition of academic advising provided by Crockett and Habley (1987) guided the present study:

> Academic advising is a developmental process which assists students in the clarification of their life/career goals and in the development of educational plans for the realization of these goals. It is a decision-making process by which students realize their maximum educational potential through communication and information exchanges with an advisor; it is ongoing, multi-faceted, and the responsibility of both student and advisor. The advisor serves as a facilitator of communication, a coordinator of learning experiences through course and career planning, and academic progress review, and an agent of referral to other campus agencies as needed. (p. 9)

Organization of Academic Advising

The tendency to confuse academic advising organizational structures with delivery systems was identified by Habley (1983). He stated that it is necessary to understand both the people and procedures used in academic advising as well as the organizational context and organizational structure.

Organizational Context

Organizational context was defined by Habley (1983) as the environment in which advising must function, that is, the institution's mission, norms, and scope of program offerings. Hines (1984) discussed the organizational context of academic advising in terms of contemporary administrative and management

concepts, the relationship of institutional characteristics to academic advising, and components of academic advising delivery systems. He maintained that organization and administrative structures tend to reflect dominant modes of organizational behavior, values, importance afforded academic advising, preferences of chief administrators, and institutional history.

A study was conducted by Habley and McAuley (1987) in which surveys were completed by 450 individuals who had viewed a presentation on Habley's (1983) organizational models of academic advising. A positive relationship was identified between the size of institutions and the degree of decentralization of academic advising services. This finding supports the premises of Habley (1983) and Hines (1984) that organizational context considerations are among the determinants of the organization of academic advising.

Organizational Structures

Habley (1983) stated that "it is necessary to design an organizational structure that is consistent with and responsive to the organizational context, the people, and the policies and procedures of the institution" (p. 536). Sandeen (1989) agreed that determining the best organizational structures for student services requires consideration of multiple constituent groups.

Organizational structure was defined by Habley (1983) as "the formalization of those factors that are unique to the institution in which the program must function" (p. 536). While Hines (1984) stated that organizational structure is a "vital consideration," he cautioned that it "not be ascribed an excessive degree of importance" (p. 338).

Organizational structures employed in the academic advising of undergraduate students have been described in different ways in the literature. Gordon (1992) gave a general description of the organization of academic advising as being either centralized, decentralized, or a coordinated effort between units,

recognizing that the size and type of institution as well as its objectives determine its organizational patterns. A more detailed description of the organization of academic advising was developed by Habley (1983). He identified seven organizational models employed in the delivery of academic advising. These models are widely referred to in the literature (e.g., Voorhees, 1990; King, 1993). A description of the models is provided in Table 2.1.

Delivery of Academic Advising

In some cases, the use of specific organizational models may dictate who delivers academic advising services (e.g., the faculty-only model described by Habley, 1983). In most cases the selected model includes several delivery systems. Crockett (1985) listed factors that influence the choice of delivery system for academic advising. He believed that institutions need to identify and/or define these aspects: (a) the advising needs of students, (b) the person or unit responsible for advising services as determined by the organizational structure of the institution, (c) the desired outcomes of advising--whether they be information giving or a developmental process, (d) the available resources, (e) the impact of collective bargaining or faculty contract agreements, and (f) the desired ratio of advisees to advisor.

Gordon (1992) described five delivery models of academic advising: individual advising, group advising, academic advising courses, computer-assisted advising, and self advising. These models are discussed below in more detail.

Individual Advising

This traditional model described by Gordon (1992) involves an exchange between the advisor and student in which academic and related issues are discussed in relation to the student's needs and aspirations. King (1988, 1993) discussed the personnel involved in the delivery of individual advising in terms of (a) accessibility and availability to students, (b) priority placed on advising, (c) knowledge

Table 2.1

Habley's Organizational Models of Academic Advising

Model	Description of Model
Faculty-only Advising	All students are assigned to faculty members for advising, typically in the field of study of the student. This is the only model that refers both to an organizational model and a delivery system.
Supplementary Advising	All students are assigned to faculty members for advising. There is an office that provides general academic information and referral for students. The monitoring and approval of academic transactions of students remain the responsibility of faculty advisors.
Split Advising	An advising office advises a specific group of students (e.g., undecided, underprepared, or nontraditional students). Advising in the advising office occurs for a specified period of time or until a specific set of requirements have been completed by students, after which they are assigned to a faculty advisor.
Dual Advising	Each student has two advisors. Faculty provide advising related to students' programs of study, while advisors in an advising office provide advising related to institutional academic policies and registration procedures.
Total Intake Advising	Staff in an administrative unit are responsible for advising all students for a specified period of time or until specific requirements have been met. After meeting those requirements, each student is assigned to a member of the faculty for advising.
Satellite Advising	Advising offices are maintained in separate academic subunits and provide advising for all students whose field of study they house. In most cases, advising shifts from the satellite office to a specific faculty member when students declare a major.
Self-contained Advising	All academic advising takes place in a centralized advising office from admission to graduation.

Source: Adapted from Habley W. R. (1983) and King (1988).

regarding the academic discipline, (d) knowledge of student development, (e) need for training, (f) cost to institutions, and (g) credibility with faculty and staff. The relative advantages and disadvantages of five types of academic advisors as identified by King (1988) are presented below.

Faculty members have traditionally performed academic advising. The benefits of using faculty as advisors include the low cost to the institution, their knowledge of advising issues related to their respective disciplines, their credibility with other faculty and staff, and the well-documented positive impact of informal student-faculty interaction on student growth, satisfaction, and persistence. Disadvantages of using faculty advisors are their limited availability, limited understanding of student development theory, and lack of motivation to advise due to the lack of institutional recognition and reward for academic advising.

Another means of individual advising is for an institution to employ professional advisors whose focus is providing academic support and services for students. Advantages of the use of professional advisors include the tendency to be centrally located; accessibility; high priority placed on academic advising; proactive approach to academic advising; broad-based knowledge of institutional policies, programs, and procedures; and knowledge of student development theory gained through education and training. Disadvantages of professional advisors include their higher cost and training needs, their lack of in-depth knowledge of specific educational disciplines and career paths, and a lack of credibility with faculty.

Counsellors are often used as academic advisors at two-year institutions. They offer many of the same advantages and disadvantages as professional advisors although they may place greater priority on developmental, psychological, or career counselling services than professional advisors.

Peer advisors are students who provide academic advising and are either paid or unpaid. Advantages of the use of students as advisors include their

accessibility, availability, high satisfaction with and acceptance by advisees, and their lower cost. Drawbacks of using students as advisors include their possible lack of objectivity, difficulty in balancing the advisor and student roles, limited knowledge of courses and student development theory, training and supervision requirements, and lack of continuity and accountability.

Paraprofessional advisors are those non-students such as retired persons or alumni who are interested in working with students. The advantages and disadvantages of using paraprofessional advisors are similar to those of using peer advisors. An additional advantage is that advising could be their priority and the potential for continuity is high.

Table 2.2 summarizes the above discussion in the form of a matrix.

Group Advising

Advising may also be delivered, according to Gordon (1992), through small groups of students who meet with an advisor at designated times and locations to receive academic information and an opportunity to interact with peers on subjects of academic relevance. The benefits of a group advising delivery system were apparent in a discussion by Winston et al. (1988) of the "intentionally structured group" which was defined to be an intervention designed to promote specific goals within a planned social environment and structure. They identified such groups as having potential to enhance student development in the following ways:

1. Groups are an economical use of personnel and resources.
2. Groups appear less threatening than individual counselling.
3. Members of the groups gain more from the experience than they would have through individual interventions.
4. Groups often focus attention on developmental areas for which the stimulus for change is too diluted in the overall campus environment.

Table 2.2

Relative Strengths and Weaknesses of Types of Academic Advisors

Identified by King (1988)

Delivery system/ Advisor	Access/ avail-abilty	Priority placed on advising	Knowledge of academic discipline	Knowledge of student development	Need for required training	Cost to institution	Credibility with faculty and staff
Faculty Advisors	Low	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Professional Advisors	High	High	Average	High	Average	High	Low
Counsellors	Average	Average	Average	High	Average	High	Average
Peer Advisors	High	Average	Low	Low	High	Low	Average
Para-professional Advisors	High	High	Average	Average	High	Low	Average

Source: King, M. C. (1988).

5. Students are generally satisfied with well-designed and implemented group experiences.

6. Group interventions are versatile; they can focus on a given population of students, on identified problems, or a developmental task.

7. Group settings can provide a "safe" place to try out new roles and to practice different ways of relating to others.

8. Well-designed and implemented groups can make excellent use of instructional strategies identified in several models of student development intervention.

9. The connection with a peer group is an important aspect of personal development.

Academic Advising Courses

Gordon (1992) reported that required or optional courses offered for credit are gaining in popularity as an academic advising delivery model. She identified these courses as being especially popular with first-year and transfer student groups. According to Gordon and Grites (1984), these courses take many forms but are most often used to orient students over an extended period of time. Literature regarding the "freshman year experience" is replete with descriptions of courses designed to enhance first year student success. Studies reported by Fidler and Hunter (1989) provided evidence supporting the positive impact of freshman seminars on student retention, student satisfaction, academic achievement and relationships, and the knowledge and use of student services and activities. Gordon (1992) identified several strengths of academic advising courses. She suggested that academic information may be provided in depth and take far less time than providing the same amount of information to students individually. Students with adjustment concerns (such as study habits, homesickness) may not only receive assistance but also support. The course instructor may be the

student's advisor, allowing an academic advising relationship to be developed very quickly over a concentrated period of time. In addition, receiving academic credit for a course often gives academic advising tasks credibility, making students more apt to take the content seriously.

Computer-assisted Advising

Computer technology may be employed to match student records with degree requirements with improved accuracy, consistency, and frequency. According to Gordon (1992), interactive computer programs that provide career and academic information are also used to advise.

Ray et al. (1991) reported on a computer-assisted advising system in a professional school in a state college in the United States where a faculty-only model had previously existed. The new system was designed to (a) provide accurate information to students, (b) improve convenience and availability, and (c) reduce the amount of time faculty spent performing routine academic advising. Students having questions that necessitated seeing their advisors were still free to do so in this new system. An evaluation of the program found overwhelming agreement on the part of students and faculty that the new system was as good or better than the previous one. An increase in errors in advising information was reported, however, these errors were determined to be programming flaws and were easily corrected. The authors identified several desirable characteristics of an advising system that incorporates computer-assisted advising. Ray et al. (1991) acknowledged that

> the potential success of a computer advising system would seem to depend partly upon whether the curricula are highly prescriptive (i.e., include few choices) or not. In the first case, students can follow a checklist with little need for human advice. In the latter case, human advice is more valuable to help evaluate the various options. (p. 22)

Self-advising

Printed materials intended to provide information needed by students to perform certain academic functions--such as user-friendly scheduling kits, registration guides, and academic calendars--were identified by Gordon (1992) as examples of the self-advising delivery model. Grites (1984a) stated that "the success of any advising program may be attributed to the quality of information available to the students and advisors" (p. 55). He suggested that proper use of admissions materials, institutional calendars, student handbooks, and class schedules results in more accurate, active, and productive advising. According to Grites, advisors should be involved in the development of such information and should "encourage students to become more active and more responsible in the advising process and their education" (p. 55).

Evaluation of Academic Advising

In this section, evaluation of academic advising is discussed in terms of its role and methods of evaluation.

Role of Evaluation in Academic Advising

Recently, according to Kelley and Lynch (1991), increased attention has been given to the evaluation of academic advising in higher education. They considered this to be due to (a) the relationship between academic advising and retention and (b) the use of academic advising effectiveness as an important institutional criterion in evaluation of services. Gordon (1992) added financial restraint as another reason for increased emphasis on evaluation. Although Habley, Crockett, and Cowart (1987), in a nation-wide survey, found that systematic evaluation of academic advising at institutions in the U.S. had doubled in five years, evaluation still occurred in less than half of the reporting institutions.

Gordon (1992) defined evaluation of academic advising as "a purposeful set of activities that help to determine the value of a program and its parts . . .

examining and judging how we have accomplished the goals we have set " (p. 155). Evaluation is often referred to as being either formative or summative. Crockett (1988) provided a comparison of these types of evaluation. Formative and summative evaluation share the goals of improving advising services and both involve the gathering, interpreting, and sharing of data. Summative evaluation is intended to assist in decision making and to provide judgments on effectiveness, whereas formative evaluation is intended to foster the development and improvement of the academic advising system.

Crockett (1988) listed the following basic assumptions of the role of evaluation and reward in the organization and delivery of academic advising services:

1. Evaluation and measurement can improve program effectiveness and individual advisor performance.
2. Academic advising programs, as well as individual advisors, should be systematically and periodically appraised.
3. Evaluation by students is the most direct and useful method of assessing the effectiveness of academic advising.
4. If advising is part of an individual's position responsibility, then effectiveness as an advisor should be a consideration in decisions about that individual such as promotion, tenure, and merit pay.
5. For an evaluation program to have usefulness there must be a strong link between performance, appraisal of performance, and reward for quality performance.
6. Every evaluation system can be improved: there is no perfect method of evaluating the totality of advisor or program performance. (p. 169)

Methods of Evaluating Academic Advising

Hanson and Raney (1993) stated that "although there is a growing consensus that academic advising must be evaluated, there is much less agreement about what constitutes necessary and sufficient evaluation activity" (p. 35). Multiple models of evaluation crossing disciplinary boundaries were cited by Gordon (1992).

A review of 25 assessment instruments used to evaluate academic advising was provided by Srebnik (1988). The instruments fell into these categories:

(a) student surveys that evaluate advisors and advising methods; (b) student surveys focusing on the advising centres, not the advisors; (c) surveys for advisors and students that ask parallel questions allowing corroboration and comparison of results; (d) advisor surveys regarding attitudes, rewards, objectives, resources, etc., associated with academic advising; and (e) broader student services surveys that address academic advising in some way.

The successful use of student focus groups in evaluation of academic advising services was described by Kramer (1992). Crockett (1988) identified the "American College Testing Academic Advising Audit" (Crockett, 1987) and the "Standards and Guidelines for Academic Advising" (Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/Developmental Programs, 1986) as useful evaluative instruments for academic advising programs. Self-study was cited by Kaufmann (1984) as a common method for academic advising evaluation.

Crockett (1988) listed four methods for evaluating advisors: student evaluation, self-evaluation, supervisory performance review, and peer review. While the Third American College Testing National Survey of Academic Advising (Habley, Crockett, & Cowart, 1988) found none of the methods to be widely used, the two most common were student evaluation and supervisory performance review. According to Crockett (1988), the general lack of evaluation of individual advisor performance can often be traced to one or more of the following factors:

1. Placing a low priority on advising responsibilities in the total faculty evaluation scheme.
2. Confusion about the purposes for which the evaluation is being conducted (e.g., formative or summative).
3. General resistance by faculty to evaluation.
4. Lack of consensus on acceptable evaluation criteria.
5. Fear of student evaluation as a major component in advisor evaluation.
6. Lack of tangible recognition/reward systems tied directly to the evaluation of individual advisor performance. (p. 178)

Evaluation of academic advising by students has received much attention in the literature. While Voorhees (1990) argued that students do not have a

framework within which to evaluate advising, others presented the opposite view. Crockett (1988) stated that "advisee evaluation is the most direct and useful method of assessing advising effectiveness" (p. 169). Similarly, those receiving academic advising services were thought to be the best evaluators by Neale and Sidorenko (1988). Because multiple methods are often used in the delivery of academic advising at a single institution, Hanson and Raney (1993) felt it was important to understand how the advising process works across the institution from a student's perspective. They added that it was important to assess student satisfaction with the content and process of advising.

In consideration of student evaluation methods, Kelley and Lynch (1993) acknowledged that evaluation of performance depends, in part, on the expectations that students bring to the situation. Their research found that students use four primary and three secondary factors when evaluating advisors. Of these primary factors, "Meeting Dynamics" and "Socio-emotional" dimensions were more highly correlated with overall effectiveness than "Knowledge." However, a study conducted by Beasley-Fielstein (1986) of student preferences in the advisee-advisor relationship found that a personal relationship, as espoused by the developmental approach to academic advising, may not be seen as practical or necessary from a student standpoint.

Neale and Sidorenko (1988) conducted an evaluation of academic advising in an institution in the CEGEP educational system in Quebec using three sources: (a) student opinion, (b) advisor predictions of students' responses, and (c) an advisor self-evaluation. They found that their evaluation tool reaped benefits for individual advisors and for the academic advising service, as listed below.

1. The evaluation provided a solid base upon which to improve the services because it helped to assess student needs and to identify areas for improvement.

2. The data identified areas for professional development for the advisors as a group.

3. The evaluation caused the advisors to think in concrete, objective terms about the notion of what excellence in advising means and what it takes to provide it.

4. The evaluation strengthened the position of advising within the institution because the level of student satisfaction with the service was visible and because problems were quickly addressed.

5. The evaluation was a positive experience for all the advisors. It was found to improve morale and to motivate the advising team in its quest for "excellence in academic advising."

Effective Academic Advising

Characteristics of and recommendations for effective advising systems found in the literature are summarized in this section.

Saluri and Habley (1988) presented brief synopses of exemplary academic advising programs which had won awards through the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) from 1984 to 1987. Similarly, Grites (1984b) described successful academic advising programs, the advantages of each system, and recommendations for their implementation by other institutions. Saluri and Habley identified these effective advising programs by the type of institution while Grites identified them by their delivery system. Grites concluded that a combination of approaches would provide the "ideal" advising program.

For academic advising to be an effective process, Frost (1991) was of the opinion that the needs of both participants in the relationship should be considered. She stated that "successful advising depends on effective advisors, and advisor's effectiveness depends in part on how they were selected and trained" (p. 63). Standards set for academic advising by the Council for the Advancement of

Standards for Student Services/Developmental Programs (1986) state that professional academic advisors should have an

> understanding of student development; a comprehensive knowledge of the institution, its programs, academic requirements, majors, minors, and student services; a demonstrated interest in working with and assisting students; a willingness to participate in pre-service and in-service training and other professional activities; and demonstrated interpersonal skills. (p. 11)

The 1987 American College Testing Third National Survey of Academic Advising (Habley, Crockett, and Cowart, 1987) found that strategies for faculty selection and participation in the advising process were either nonexistent or poorly conceived and delivered. Neither voluntary participation nor use of selection criteria were in use in the majority of institutions involved in the study. Keller (1988) commented that because of a common view that training is unnecessary, training for academic advisors has not gained acceptance. He identified this as being unfortunate since the literature suggests that effective training improves academic advising and has many positive results for students.

Grites (1978) suggested that academic advising training programs should have the following objectives: (a) to provide advisors with accurate and timely information about the policies, procedures and processes which affect the advising relationship; (b) to provide advisors with additional skills often required in their advising responsibilities; (c) to increase student satisfaction with advising; (d) to increase advisor satisfaction with advising; and (e) to develop a comprehensive approach to academic planning as part of the total advising process.

According to Gordon (1992) students may derive many benefits from an effective academic advising program. Students are more often successful in attaining their educational and career objectives, achieving grade point averages consistent with their ability, and completing the degrees they seek. An effective academic advising program also leads to students being more satisfied with the

advising process, having more positive attitudes toward the institution, and having more meaningful relationships with advisors.

Grites (1979) stated that although each institution will determine the specific mechanisms to achieve effectiveness, certain recommendations seemed generally appropriate. Habley (1988) made the same recommendations and commented on their appropriateness a decade later. These recommendations are outlined below (Grites, 1979):

1. Conduct a thorough assessment of the current state of the campus advising programs.
2. Identify one person whose primary responsibility is to coordinate academic advising.
3. Implement an advisor selection process.
4. Develop a comprehensive advisor pre-service and in-service development program.
5. Develop a scheme for individual advisor evaluation.
6. Implement an advisor incentive or reward program.
7. Review the total advising program every five years.
8. Conduct research aimed at improving the advising program. (pp. 46-54)

Summary

The field of academic advising has received significant attention in the past decade and yet many institutions continue to fail to meet the expectations of their students through this service. Each institution has a unique organizational context, stakeholders, policies and procedures, and therefore, unique organizational structures and means of delivery of academic advising exist. Several organizational structures and delivery systems were identified in the literature.

Evaluation of academic advising is considered to be an important part of effective advising. While there are many methods and sources of evaluation, students receiving the service are generally considered to be the best evaluators. Effective academic advising is multi-faceted and achieves benefits for the students and the institution. Academic advising programs which are effective have these characteristics: (a) organizational structures and delivery systems which suit the institution and its students, (b) regular program evaluation, (c) advisor selection

criteria that recognize the importance of academic advising, (d) advisor training programs with appropriate content, (e) assistance to students in maximizing the benefits of higher education available to them, and (f) students and advisors who are satisfied with the academic advising relationship.

Chapter 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

Introduction

The research design, method used, and the research context form the content of this chapter. Included are a detailed description of the sample selection process; methods of gaining approval to conduct the research; development and testing of the instrument; collection, analysis, and reporting of data; justification for the methodological approach; the reliability, validity, and objectivity of the findings; researcher bias; and ethical considerations.

Research Design

This study used qualitative research methods to provide a detailed description of the organization and delivery of academic advising for undergraduate students in three faculties at the University of Alberta. The work was exploratory and descriptive. Borg and Gall (1989) stated that the emphasis on studying the whole setting in order to understand reality is perhaps the most important characteristic of qualitative research.

Information relative to the research question was collected from two sources: (a) open-ended interviews with 21 individuals involved with academic advising in three faculties at the University of Alberta, and (b) an examination of pertinent faculty and university documents. The perceptions of academic advisors constituted the major focus for the study.

Research Method

Selection of the sample, development of the interview instruments, data collection, data analysis, and discussion of the findings are described in this section.

Selection of the Sample

The purpose of the study--to provide a detailed description of the organization and delivery of academic advising for undergraduate students in selected faculties at the University of Alberta--necessitated the identification of (a) three faculties with differing organizational structures and delivery of academic advising and (b) individuals who provide academic advising.

The three faculties which constituted the sample in this study were the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics; the Faculty of Education; and the Faculty of Science. These faculties were chosen following consultation with the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Student Services) within the Faculty of Education. She identified the unique approaches to academic advising employed in the three faculties and suggested contact people in the other two faculties. Meetings took place with these two individuals and both were in support of the research. The contact people from each of the three faculties identified individuals involved in academic advising in a variety of capacities within their faculty whom they believed would be willing to participate in the study.

The potential respondents were contacted by telephone or by a letter describing the nature of the research and inviting them to participate. (See Appendix A for sample letter.) Each individual invited to participate agreed to be interviewed. The three contact people in the three faculties were among those interviewed. The organization and delivery of academic advising in each faculty necessitated different numbers of interviews and types of advisors interviewed. Borg and Gall (1989) identified this selection technique as stratified sampling where the researcher is assured that "certain subgroups will be represented in the sample in proportion to their numbers in the population itself" (p. 224). Table 3.1 presents the faculty and position title or role of each respondent.

Table 3.1

Numbers of Interview Respondents by Faculty and Position Title

Institutional Role	Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics	Faculty of Education	Faculty of Science	Total
Academic administrators having a coordinating and advising role	Associate Dean	Associate Dean Assistant Dean Assistant Dean	Associate Dean	5
Non-academic staff having an advising role	Student Services Coordinator	Admissions/Record Coordinator Admissions/Record Coordinator	Administrative Assistant Student Advisor	5
Academic staff having an advising role	Professor/Program Committee Chair Professor/Program Committee Chair Assistant Professor	Professor Professor/Dept. Associate Chair	Professor Professor/ Dept. Associate Chair	7
Students having an advising role	*(no peer advising system in place)*	*(no peer advising system in place)*	Peer Advisor Peer Advisor Peer Advisor Peer Advisor	4
Total	5	7	9	21

Development of the Instruments

Two interview instruments derived from content grounded in the literature were used to focus on the research objectives. The interview schedule intended for University of Alberta employees providing academic advising services was pilot-tested, while the interview schedule intended for students involved as peer advisors in the Faculty of Science was not.

The academic advisors' interview schedule was first pilot-tested with an academic advisor from a faculty at the University of Alberta not included in the main study. As a result of the feedback and data collected from this respondent, adjustments were made to the instrument. The adjusted instrument was then pilot-tested with two individuals with knowledge of the organization and delivery of academic advising at the postsecondary institutions at which they were employed. These individuals were not employed at the University of Alberta and were not included in the main study. One of the two resulting transcripts was analyzed and presented in a pilot study report.

Open-ended questions in the pilot test allowed the expression of perceptions which are important to the organization and delivery of academic advising services in postsecondary institutions. These may have been neglected in the literature or omitted in the preliminary design of the instrument. These discussions were intended to reveal other variables viewed as important in academic advising. In addition, the two respondents were invited to address any other matters not included in the interview. Both indicated that the instrument was comprehensive but suggested the addition of a question regarding students in academic difficulty. The comments of the respondents and the findings resulting from the analysis of one transcript resulted in clarification, refinement, and modification of the interview instrument prior to administering it to the study sample. The interviewing skills of the researcher were also improved as a result of the pilot interviews.

Although the peer advisor interview schedule was not pilot-tested, four interviews were conducted with students where perhaps two would have sufficed. In each case the respondents were asked to add other relevant comments not addressed in the interview. Each respondent indicated that the interview had been comprehensive and had no other comments to add. Knowledge gained through the pilot-testing of the academic advisor interview schedule was beneficial in the design and conduct of the peer advisor interviews.

Data Collection

The major method of data collection was the interview and the major source of data was individuals delivering academic advising services. Between April 3 and June 2, 1995, 21 individuals were interviewed. Respondents were invited by either telephone or letter to participate. Brief telephone or in-person conversations were held with all but two of the respondents during the scheduling of interviews. These conversations provided the researcher with the opportunity to answer any preliminary questions about the research and to develop rapport.

In each case, a copy of the interview schedule was provided to the respondents in advance with the understanding that it was for their information, not because any preparation was required on their part. Six of the interviews occurred in the office area of the researcher, while the remaining 15 occurred in the office areas of the respondents. All interviews were recorded on audio tape. They varied in length from 20 to 45 minutes with an average length of approximately 30 minutes. The atmosphere of the interviews was relaxed and friendly.

The interview schedules consisted of 15 questions for the academic advisors (Appendix B), and 12 questions for the peer advisors (Appendix C). Some questions were divided into parts. Each schedule consisted primarily of open-ended questions.

The interviews were semi-structured, that is, questions were not necessarily asked in the same sequence or with the same wording. Respondents were free to discuss their academic advising system in a conversational style with the understanding that the researcher would ensure that each question was addressed at some point during the interview. The researcher made few comments during the interview except to ask for clarification, elaboration, or specific examples. In several cases where areas had been addressed without the associated question being asked directly, the researcher asked for a summary of the previous discussion as it related to the specific question.

In addition to the interviews, some academic advisors provided documents used in coordination or delivery of academic advising services.

Analysis and Reporting of Data

Data were transcribed from audio-tape to hard copy by the researcher and stored on computer. Numerous readings were undertaken to identify the major themes and sub-themes. The documents provided by academic advisors were examined to obtain a better understanding of each advising system and to provide additional information.

Content analysis was used to condense the data collected. The analysis focused on qualitative aspects of the data. Coding frames and criteria of selection within each coding frame were developed that corresponded with those found in the literature and with those found in the transcripts (Appendix D). The data were coded according to themes, that is, phrases, entire sentences, or groups of sentences that addressed the specific criteria. When coding was complete, uncoded sections of the transcripts were carefully read for relevance to the sub-problems and identified coding categories. As a result, new categories of data were identified and coded.

Rich responses of the respondents were frequently used by the researcher to ensure that the reporting coincided as accurately as possible with what was actually said. Some of the direct quotations included in this thesis were slightly paraphrased to improve readability without affecting their meaning. The task was to express the responses of 21 individuals involved in academic advising accurately and precisely, attending to the range of responses and also formulating generalizations where possible.

Justification for the Selected Method

Erickson, Florio, and Buschman (1980) stated that qualitative methods are best at seeking answers to the following broad research questions:

1. What is happening in this field setting?
2. What do the happenings mean to the people involved in them?
3. What do people have to know in order to be able to do what they do in the setting?
4. How does what is happening here relate to what is happening in the wide social context of this setting?
5. How does the organization of what is happening here differ from that found in other places and times?

Borg and Gall (1989) cited the study of organizational structures and problems, definition of important variables, hypothesis generation and theory development, and the study of new phenomena as especially appropriate applications of the qualitative research method.

The research method described in the preceding section was chosen for its suitability to this study. Listed below are the characteristics seen as supportive of this selection:

1. Data from academic advisors in a variety of institutional roles within the faculties studied were appropriate to gain a complete and accurate description of the academic advising systems in use.

2. Pilot interviews gave the researcher a sense of how data collection for the study would proceed. Adjustments in interview style and instruments were accommodated at this stage.

3. Interviews were an appropriate data collection method because the nature of the research problem required in-depth description and the ability to ask for clarification, elaboration, and/or examples.

4. Documentation relevant to advising services within each of these faculties provided further assistance in description.

Reliability, Validity, and Objectivity of the Research

Achieving exceptionally high degrees of reliability, validity, or objectivity is difficult in the social sciences. As Borg and Gall stated (1989), "we are all products of an environment that subtly shapes and distorts our perceptions in innumerable ways" (p. 178). Therefore, the researcher must understand factors which can influence the reliability, validity, and objectivity of research. The means by which attention was given to these items in this research study are outlined below.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency of assessments in research. LeCompte and Goetz (1982) stated that reliability is "the extent to which studies can be replicated" (p. 35). That is, will researchers using similar methods and instruments obtain the same or similar results in future studies? Because social phenomena cannot be reconstructed precisely, even exact replication of research methods may fail to produce identical results.

Inter-rater reliability can be considered high in this study. A second researcher coded a randomly selected transcript using the coding key developed by the main researcher. Assessments were consistent with those of the main researcher.

Validity

Cook and Campbell (1979) used the term validity to refer to the "best available approximation to the truth or falsity of propositions" (p. 37). That is, do

the data represent what they are intended to assess? Reliability is required for validity, as it includes both consistency and accuracy. Internal validity was defined by Borg and Gall (1989) as "the degree to which research findings can be distorted by extraneous variables" (p. 405). They defined external validity as "the degree to which the findings can be generalized to the population from which they were drawn" (p. 404). Threats to validity were considered and addressed in this study.

The level of comfort of the researcher in interviewing increased throughout the data collection phase of the study. However, examination of the transcripts revealed no observable difference in the nature or number of probing questions that were asked.

The use of a second researcher in coding a transcript served to confirm accuracy of analysis in this study. The taping and verbatim transcription also helped to ensure accuracy.

The sample in this study included individuals identified as knowledgeable about academic advising by the contacts within each of the three faculties studied. The levels of knowledge of and commitment to academic advising of those in the sample may have been higher than those of their colleagues not included in the sample. This may have occurred because respondents were identified by individuals in each faculty with a probable desire to have their advising system portrayed in the best possible light. To address this concern in part, between five and nine individuals in a variety of academic advising roles were interviewed in each faculty. The intent was to lessen the likelihood that findings were representative of a single point of view. However, this did not lessen the possible homogeneity of the group. The analysis of relevant documentation also served to improve the credibility of interview data. The lack of time and resources restricted data collection to those involved in organizing or delivering academic advising and therefore excluded the students receiving the service.

The findings of this study have limited generalizability, as discussed in Chapter 1. Grites (1979) suggested that individual institutions are unique and therefore academic advising structures may not be transferable. This corresponds with Cook and Campbell's (1979) identification of interaction between sample selection and unique contexts or histories as a threat to internal validity. However, Habley (1983) argued that "it is highly probable that those [academic advising organizational] structures have general interinstitutional applicability" (p. 535). While faculties with similar characteristics and contexts may or may not employ similar academic advising systems, this study did not address generalizability beyond the three faculties studied at the University of Alberta.

Objectivity

Borg and Gall (1989) stated that while flexibility, adaptability, and human interaction are strengths of the interview, it also allows subjectivity and possible biases. These biases may be due to the predispositions of the respondents or the interviewer, or may be due to the procedures used in the study. The semi-structured interview was chosen for this study as it provided a reasonable level of objectivity while still permitting thorough understanding. Bias introduced through purposive sampling was acknowledged in the discussion of validity. The potential biases of the researcher are addressed in the next section.

Researcher Bias

In addressing the question of researcher orientation, Sandleowski (1986) stated that "any study and its findings are at least as much a reflection of the investigator as the phenomenon studied" (p. 34). This study reflects the researcher's perspective that higher education students require support in many areas in order to achieve their educational potential. Without adequate support services for students, those students with family and peers who have had higher education experiences probably have an unfair advantage over those who do not

have that informal network of information. (See Corman, Barr, and Caputo (1992) for a discussion of the problem of attrition in Canadian universities.) Academic advising is thought to be one of the most important supporting activities for students of all the student services.

At the beginning of this study, the researcher supported a contingency approach to academic advising, that is, there is no one best way to advise undergraduate students. This position was based on the perception that advisors require large repertoires of skills and knowledge to identify the needs of the students they advise as well as to identify the best advising approach for each individual. The researcher believed that, regardless of developmental stage, every student can benefit from positive personal contact with an institutional representative in an appropriate advising relationship. This contact is seen as critical to student satisfaction, student retention, and student success. (See Pascarella (1980) for a discussion of the impact of informal contact between faculty members and students on student success.)

Ethical Considerations

Participation of individuals involved in academic advising in this study was voluntary. Participants were advised in their copy of the interview schedule, as well as orally at the time of the interview, that they could withdraw at any time. The names of participating individuals were not used in the reporting of results although their position titles were. In some cases this allowed for identification of the individual. Those individuals were made aware of that fact and agreed to participate anyway. Any tables or text describing positions held by respondents that would allow them to be identified were provided to those respondents to give them an opportunity to reconsider their consent to that reporting method. Opinions and information were treated confidentially. The audio-taped interviews and transcripts will remain in the sole possession of the researcher for five years at

which time they will be destroyed. In accordance with the University of Alberta requirements, the research proposal was approved by the Ethics Review Committee of the Department of Educational Policy Studies.

Summary

Three faculties at the University of Alberta using differing academic advising systems and employing a unique approach to some aspect of advising were identified. Twenty-one individuals holding a role in the organization and/or delivery of academic advising in the three faculties were identified by the researcher's contacts in each faculty. The respondents were invited to participate in the study by responding to an interview conducted by the researcher. Data collected from these interviews were transcribed by the researcher and were analyzed for content. The reliability, validity, and objectivity of the study, the researcher's biases, and ethical concerns were also addressed in this chapter.

Chapter 4

OBJECTIVES AND ORGANIZATION OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

Introduction

This chapter addresses the first and second research questions: "What are the objectives of academic advising?" and "How is academic advising organized?" A description and analysis of data provided by respondents and related documents regarding the objectives of academic advising are outlined in this chapter. Organization of academic advising is described in response to the two sub-questions, (a) "What is the organizational context in which academic advising occurs?" and (b) "What organizational structures are in place for academic advising?" The chapter concludes with figures depicting the organizational structures of academic advising in use in the three faculties studied. Few direct quotations are provided in this chapter as the data were better presented as a synthesis of the statements made by both respondents and related documents.

Objectives of Academic Advising

Statements were made by respondents concerning the objectives, purpose, and function of academic advising. Respondents from all faculties indicated that the primary objective of academic advising of undergraduate students was to provide accurate and consistent information to students regarding their academic programs. Some statements were very broad such as "help students find their way" while some were more specific such as "inform students of GPA cutoffs and deadlines for transfer." Table 4.1 summarizes the objectives of academic advising as stated by respondents from each faculty and categorized by the primary recipient of the service.

Table 4.1

Objectives of Academic Advising as Identified by Academic Advisors in Three Faculties, Categorized by Primary Recipient

Primary recipient	**Objectives of academic advising**
Undergraduate students requirements	• Inform about degree, major, minor
	• Identify course equivalents
	• Identify program electives
	• Identify types of courses
	• Advise on selection of program and planning of courses
	• Advise on career opportunities
	• Provide rationale for curriculum
	• Identify and prevent academic problems
	• Inform about rules, regulations, and policies
	• Interpret calendar information
	• Create a supportive learning environment
Operations at the faculty level	• Obtain feedback from students regarding time tabling and marketability of degree
	• Provide smooth operation of programs
Prospective students	• Inform about admission requirements (new or transfer)

Organizational Context of Academic Advising

Organizational context is considered to be the environment in which academic advising activities occur. University documents and respondents in this study provided information about the programs and the students that influence the organization and delivery of academic advising. The aspects of organizational context presented in this section are (a) the nature of degree offerings within each faculty and (b) recent organizational changes that have had an affect on academic advising.

Degree Offerings

The undergraduate programs in the three faculties studied are numerous and varied. The nature of the degree offerings were considered by respondents to exert strong influence on how academic advising services were organized and delivered. These aspects are discussed for each of the faculties studied.

Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics. The Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics houses five departments and offers 19 different Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree programs. There is considerable opportunity for students to pursue areas of interest in their programs. Students within the BSc (Ag) program may, with the approval of an academic advisor, design their own programs. The Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics had significant numbers of students transfer into their programs from other faculties.

Faculty of Education. The Faculty of Education includes four departments, the School of Library and Information Studies, and six "Educational Centres." Eight different Bachelor of Education (BEd) degree programs are available as well as two Diplomas in Education. Two combined degrees are offered: BEd/BSc (in cooperation with the Faculty of Science) and BPE/BEd (in cooperation with the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation). Opportunities

for individualized program design also exist in this faculty. The Faculty of Education is considered to be a professional faculty because of its focus on the professional preparation of teachers at the undergraduate level. Large numbers of students transfer into this faculty at all years of study.

Faculty of Science. The Faculty of Science is home to 20 different departments and offers nine types of Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree programs, a Diploma in Science, and an Honors Certificate. Three programs lead to a degree in this faculty: honors, specialization, and general, although not every department has both specialization and honors programs. The honors programs are primarily for students who seek careers in scientific research or are interested in further study. The specialization programs do not concentrate on one subject to as great an extent as do the honors programs. This allows students to choose from a broader range of courses and to enroll in a greater number of courses in a secondary area of interest. The general program aims to provide a general education with a scientific emphasis. Students in the general program must choose a major and a minor. A number of students seek transfer to professional faculties at a later time.

Tables 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4 list the undergraduate degrees sought by full-time and part-time students during Winter Session and the enrollments of the 1994-1995 academic year in the faculties studied.

Recent Organizational Changes

Respondents from each of the three faculties studied identified that their faculty had undergone recent changes that had affected undergraduate academic advising. They also acknowledged that financial constraint in the institution at large had affected many aspects of their operations including academic advising.
The Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics resulted from the 1993 amalgamation of the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry and the Faculty of Home Economics. The "Program Committee" structure for academic advising

Table 4.2

Enrollment of Undergraduate Students in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics, Winter Session, 1994-1995

Degree	AD	Route	Total		Combined Total
			F/T	P/T	
BSc (Ag Bus)			3	0	3
BSc (Ag En)			3	0	3
BSc (Ag En)		Co-op	3	0	3
BSc (Ag)			64	6	70
BSc (Ag)			167	2	169
BSc (Ag)	AD		1	0	1
BSc (Forestry)			34	1	35
BSc (Forestry)			130	1	131
BSc (Forestry)	AD		1	0	1
BSc (Nutr/FdSc)			121	3	124
BSc (Nutr/FdSc)			1	2	3
BSc (Ag Bus Mgt)			21	1	22
BSc (Env & Cons)			366	10	376
BSc (Env & Cons)	AD		4	0	4
BSc (Fd Sc)			13	0	13
BSc (Home Econ)			88	5	93
BSc (Home Econ)	AD		3	0	3
BSc (Human Ecol)			110	8	118
BSc (Human Ecol)	AD		1	0	1
Probationary Students			32	1	33
Special Students			21	11	32
Visiting Students			3	1	4
FACULTY TOTAL			1, 190	52	1, 242

Source: University of Alberta. (1995b). *Summary of statistics 1994-95.* Edmonton, AB: Author.

Table 4.3

Enrollment of Undergraduate Students in the Faculty of Education,

Winter Session, 1994-1995

Degree	AD	Route	Total		Combined Total
			F/T	P/T	
BEd		Ad. Ed.	11	112	123
BEd		Elem.	1, 306	73	1, 379
BEd		Ind. Arts	3	1	4
BEd		Sec.	1, 163	58	1, 221
BEd		Voc. Ed.	2	0	2
BEd	AD	Ad. Ed.	3	11	14
BEd	AD	Elem.	46	13	59
BEd	AD	Sec.	142	14	156
BEd (BEd/BSc)		Sec.	77	1	78
BPE/BEd		Sec.	26	0	26
Diploma in Education			46	98	144
Diploma in Education	AD		0	1	1
Probationary Students		Ad. Ed.	1	1	2
Probationary Students		Elem.	10	1	11
Probationary Students		Sec.	21	5	26
Probationary Students		Voc. Ed.	1	0	1
Special Students			10	22	32
Visiting Students			4	2	6
FACULTY TOTAL			2, 872	413	3, 285

Source: University of Alberta. (1995b). *Summary of statistics 1994-95.* Edmonton, AB: Author.

Table 4.4

Enrollment of Undergraduate Students in the Faculty of Science,

Winter Session, 1994-1995

Degree	AD	Route	Total		Combined Total
			F/T	P/T	
BSc (General)			2, 824	113	2, 937
BSc (General)	AD		52	7	59
BSc (Honors)			435	3	438
BSc (Honors)		Internship	4	0	4
BSc (Honors)	AD		3	0	3
BSc (Special)			798	34	832
BSc (Special)		Internship	21	0	21
BSc (Special)	AD		43	10	53
BSc (Special)	AD	Internship	5	0	5
Diploma in Science			1	0	1
Honors Cert.			4	0	4
Probationary Students			38	2	40
Probationary Students	AD		1	0	1
Special Cert.			31	4	35
Special Cert.		Internship	2	0	2
Special Cert.	AD		1	0	1
Special Students			3	1	4
Visiting Students			17	1	18
FACULTY TOTAL			4, 283	175	4. 458

Source: University of Alberta. (1995b). *Summary of statistics 1994-95.* Edmonton, AB: Author.

and the required orientation course for new students, "University 100," are recent additions to the academic advising system. New and old curricula have been operating concurrently in the faculty so that students who entered a degree program prior to the recent changes will be able to complete their original program. The concurrent operation of programs and the new organizational structures have presented challenges for the academic advising system in this faculty. One respondent from the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics made this statement:

> *This faculty has gone through more turmoil in three years than most faculties go through in a lifetime. Students felt the brunt of it. On the other hand, we came out stronger.*

The Faculty of Education has also experienced amalgamation of departments, the implementation of new curricula, and the resultant concurrent operation of old and new curricula. One respondent from this faculty made the following statement regarding the recent changes:

> *Especially with changes happening so fast right now, we all know that we don't know everything. That's the biggest danger: when the prof doesn't know what he or she doesn't know and tells the student with authority and the student doesn't know to check. People just aren't doing that very much anymore because things move so fast that they are beginning to know that they don't know. (underscore added)*

Departments have also been amalgamated in the Faculty of Science. A challenge for at least one of the new departments has been deciding which of the academic advising systems that existed in previous departments to use in the new, combined department. Faculty advisors have had to learn about degree programs housed in their new department. Combining of curricula to reflect the new departmental structures has also had an affect on academic advising. A peer advising system has operated for three academic years in the Faculty of Science and, as with the "University 100" course in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics, it continues to evolve.

Organizational Structures of Academic Advising

Organizational structures related to academic advising in the three faculties studied are described in this section. A description of each faculty is provided in terms of coordination of academic advising services, organizational units in which academic advising occurs, people providing the academic advice, types of students seeking advice from these sources (year, program), and types of advice available.

Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics

In the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics two structures exist to provide academic advising services: the Faculty Student Services Office and the Program Committees. The Associate Dean (Academic Programs) is responsible for coordination of both academic advising structures which are described below.

Faculty Student Services Office. The two non-academic staff providing academic advising in this office are titled "Student Services Coordinators." They provide information regarding faculty regulations on admission, readmission, program requirements, transfer, course registration, withdrawal, and graduation requirements according to the University of Alberta Calendar (1995a). This description corresponded with statements made by an advisor from this office.

An academic advisor's handbook is provided by this office to faculty advisors in the departments. Staff in this office also coordinate an annual academic advisor workshop. Student Services Coordinators are in regular contact with Program Advisors as they work together to provide information to students. They refer students to the Program Advisors for academic advice or to other student services on campus when appropriate.

The nature of the academic advice available at the Faculty Student Services Office means that all students in the faculty could make use of the services available. This would be especially true for new and graduating students.

Program Committees. There are six "Program Committees" in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics, one for each degree program. The purposes of the Program Committees as described by one respondent are to (a) review requirements for that particular degree program and (b) provide academic advising to the students in that degree program. The chair and members of the six Program Committees, who are all faculty members, are the "Program Advisors." The chair and committee members are appointed by the Associate Dean after consultation with interested parties such as other faculty members and staff. There is at least one advisor for each major within each program, and committee membership ranges from four to eight faculty members plus a chair. A Student Services Coordinator from the Faculty Student Services Office sits on each Program Committee and serves as an information source and as clerical support. The Associate Dean communicates primarily with the Program Committee chairs.

Program Advisors answer general questions about careers, course content, fields of specialization, and preparation for graduate studies according to the University of Alberta Calendar (1995a). Respondents provided a description of these other types of information that the Program Advisors provide: course selection for transfer students, exceptions to core course requirements, advice for students in academic difficulty, and occasionally, advice for students in personal difficulty. Individual advisors can make recommendations for exceptions to requirements within their major, while the Program Committee may make recommendations for exceptions within the program. All students within the

faculty are enrolled in a degree program and may choose to see a Program Advisor, especially as they decide on a major or area of concentration.

Faculty of Education

The Faculty of Education Office of Undergraduate Student Services plays the primary advising role for undergraduate students in that faculty. Faculty-member advising occurs as well but to a lesser degree than in the two other faculties studied. The Associate Dean (Undergraduate Student Services) is responsible for the Office of Undergraduate Student Services and performs some coordinating activities for academic advisors in the departments.

Office of Undergraduate Student Services. Academic advising in this office is performed by non-academic and academic staff. There are four Admissions/Records Coordinators, a Senior Admissions/Records Coordinator, three Assistant Deans, and an Associate Dean, each with different academic advising roles. Non-academic staff provide information about admission, readmission, program requirements, and field experiences according to the University of Alberta Calendar (1995a). These advisors refer students to the Assistant Deans, the Associate Dean, or faculty advisors for further information. The Assistant Dean (Admissions) provides information about admission, readmission, and transfer to students whose questions cannot be answered by the Admissions/Records Coordinators. The Assistant Dean (Student Services) provides counselling services to students in either academic or personal difficulty and advises them on procedures and policies regarding academic standing. The Assistant Dean (Practicum) gives guidance to students regarding field placements.

Departments. Faculty members are designated as advisors in the individual departments. This designation is made by the Associate Chair or Chair of the department and is typically based on expertise in a given subject area or is considered to be "part of the job." According to the University of Alberta Calendar

(1995a), faculty advisors in the Faculty of Education offer advice on academic matters related to specific fields within education, specific courses, program alternatives, and preparation for graduate study. This calendar statement corresponded with statements made by faculty advisors in the departments.

Faculty of Science

In the Faculty of Science, two separate and distinct organizational structures provide academic advising to undergraduate students: the Faculty of Science Office and the departments. This faculty has two Associate Deans (Academic Programs), one who is full-time and one who is half-time. They perform some coordination of the activities of these two academic advising structures. As described earlier, specialization and honors degree students are considered to be the academic advising responsibility of the departments, while the general degree students are considered to be the responsibility of the Faculty of Science Office.

Faculty of Science Office. Academic advising is performed by three individuals in this office: a Student Services Officer, an Administrative Assistant, and an Associate Dean (half-time). These individuals are referred to as "Student Counsellors." The academic advice available at this office, according to two respondents from that office, covers these aspects: course selection, admissions information, deadline dates, graduation requirements, major requirements, transferability to other faculties, exam deferrals, and advice on academic difficulty and study skills. Academic advising offered through this office is available to all undergraduate students in the faculty, although general degree students mostly utilize this source. When appropriate, academic advisors in the Faculty of Science Office refer students to faculty advisors in the departments or to other student services on campus.

The Associate Dean (full-time) deals with students in situations related to discipline, academic appeals, and other sensitive matters. An annual academic

advisors training session is coordinated through this office and led by the Associate Dean (half-time).

Departments. The departments in the Faculty of Science are responsible for advising their specialization and honors students. Because the organization of academic advising is the prerogative of the departments, many different academic advising systems are in place. The differences were apparent from the statements of the three advisors interviewed from three different departments in this faculty. One used a non-academic staff person for the advising of specialization students, while faculty members advised honors students. A second department required specialization and honors students to see their faculty advisor in order to get their "permission to register" letter. The third department was a recent amalgamation of several others which had each kept their previous systems, and therefore the new department was not using a single academic advising system.

Summary

This chapter provided description of the objectives of academic advising, the organizational context in which academic advising occurs, and the organizational structures in use for academic advising in the three faculties studied.

While there was general agreement between respondents in the three faculties regarding the objectives of providing academic advising services to undergraduate students, these numerous objectives ranged from the provision of specific information to the more general creation of a supportive learning environment. Differences and similarities existed within the organizational contexts of the faculties studied. Each faculty had experienced organizational changes that have had an affect on academic advising. These included amalgamation of faculties and/or departments, concurrent operation of new and old curricula, and financial constraint. Aspects of organizational context such as complexity of program offerings and the number of students in programs were thought to exert a strong

influence on the organization of academic advising and were presented in this chapter.

Interesting differences and similarities were also found to exist in the organization of academic advising in the three faculties. Each faculty housed its own academic advising system and each relied both on non-academic staff in a centralized academic advising office and on faculty members in the departments to provide academic advising to undergraduate students. However, some differences existed in the organizational structures used to deliver academic advising. These organizational structures are summarized in terms of coordination, organizational unit, academic advisors, and students who seek academic advice from these sources in Figures 4.1, 4.2, and 4.3.

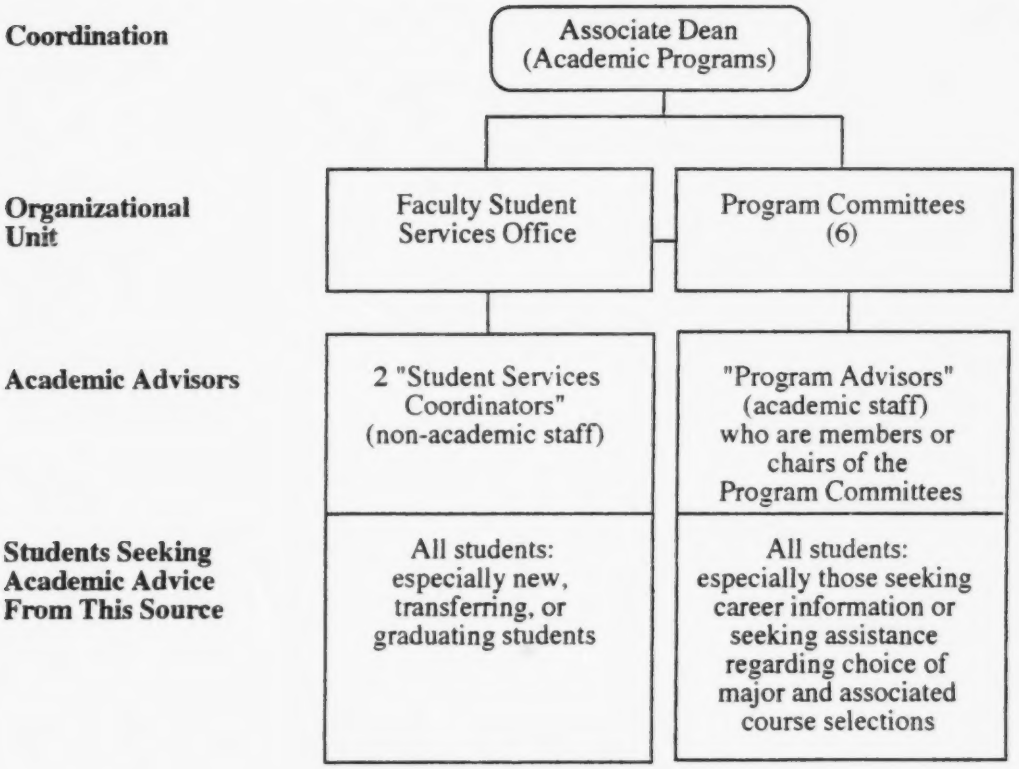

Coordination
Associate Dean
(Academic Programs)
Organizational Unit
Faculty Student Services Office
Program Committees (6)
Academic Advisors
2 "Student Services Coordinators" (non-academic staff)
"Program Advisors" (academic staff) who are members or chairs of the Program Committees
Students Seeking Academic Advice From This Source
All students: especially new, transferring, or graduating students
All students: especially those seeking career information or seeking assistance regarding choice of major and associated course selections

Figure 4.1 Organizational structure of academic advising in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics.

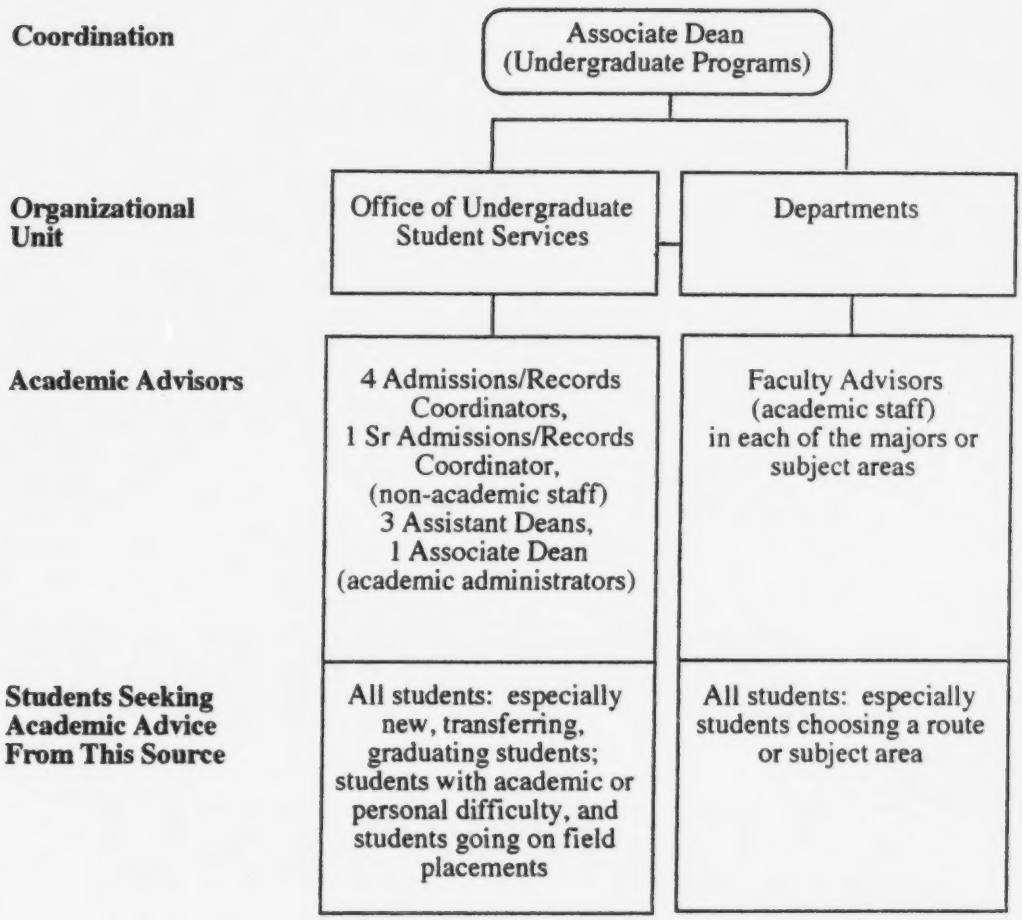

Coordination
Associate Dean
(Undergraduate Programs)
Organizational Unit
Office of Undergraduate Student Services
Departments
Academic Advisors
4 Admissions/Records Coordinators,
1 Sr Admissions/Records Coordinator,
(non-academic staff)
3 Assistant Deans,
1 Associate Dean
(academic administrators)
Faculty Advisors
(academic staff)
in each of the majors or subject areas
Students Seeking Academic Advice From This Source
All students: especially new, transferring, graduating students; students with academic or personal difficulty, and students going on field placements
All students: especially students choosing a route or subject area

Figure 4.2 Organizational structure of academic advising in the Faculty of Education.

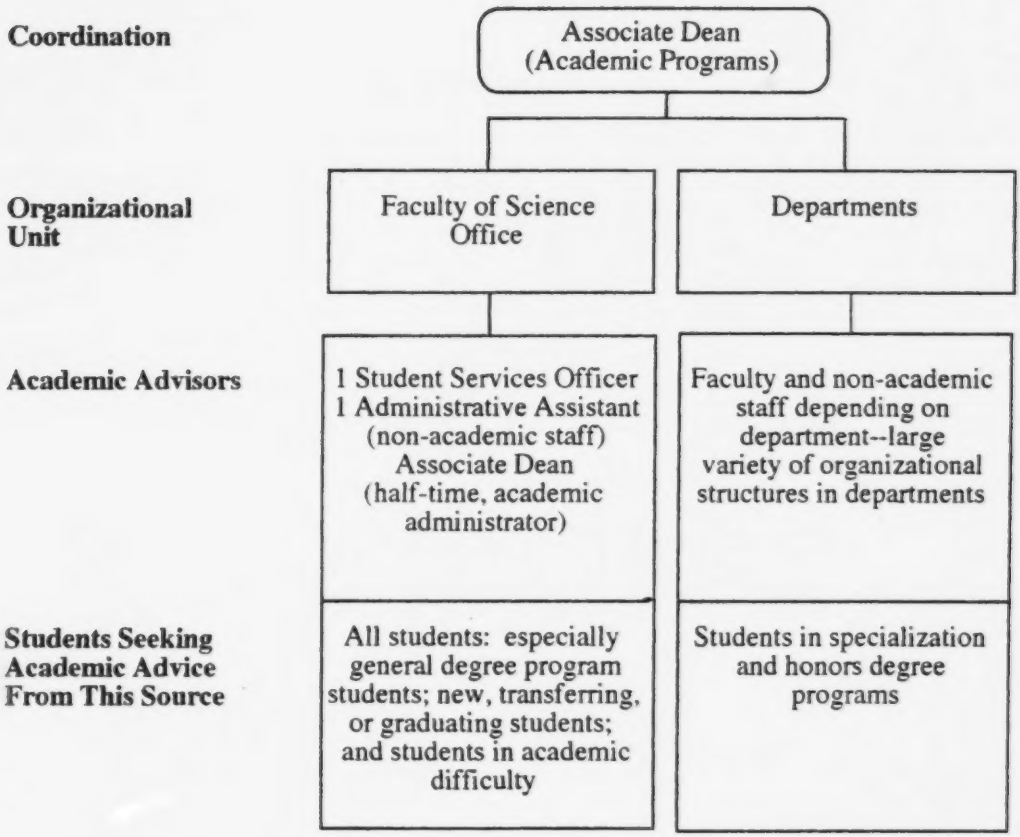

Coordination
Associate Dean (Academic Programs)
Organizational Unit
Faculty of Science Office
Departments
Academic Advisors
1 Student Services Officer
1 Administrative Assistant (non-academic staff)
Associate Dean (half-time, academic administrator)
Faculty and non-academic staff depending on department--large variety of organizational structures in departments
Students Seeking Academic Advice From This Source
All students: especially general degree program students; new, transferring, or graduating students; and students in academic difficulty
Students in specialization and honors degree programs

Figure 4.3 Organizational structure of academic advising in the Faculty of Science.

Chapter 5

DELIVERY OF ACADEMIC ADVISING

Introduction

Description of the delivery of academic advising services in the three faculties studied is provided in this chapter in response to the third research question: "How is academic advising delivered?" The chapter is organized according to the associated sub-questions: (a) "Who are the academic advisors and what is their expertise for academic advising?" (b) "How is the availability of academic advising communicated to students?" (c) "How do students access academic advising?" (d) "What specific procedures are in use for students experiencing academic difficulty?" (e) "What approaches do academic advisors take to the academic advising process?" and (f) "What additional academic advising delivery models are in use?"

Academic Advisors

Respondents in each of the faculties stated that "individual academic advising," that is, information exchanged between a student and an institutional representative, was the primary academic advising delivery system in use. Academic advisors were defined in this study to be those individuals identified by the department or faculty as possessing the necessary knowledge to provide academic advice to undergraduate students. In the three faculties studied, academic advisors occupied a variety of institutional roles and had different areas of expertise. Description of academic advisors and the academic advice which they can provide was obtained from both respondents and relevant documents. The positions, locations, and areas of expertise of academic advisors in the three faculties studied are summarized in Tables 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3.

Table 5.1

Academic Advisors in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics by Position, Location, and Academic Advice Provided

Position	Location	Academic Advice Provided
Student Services Coordinators (Non-academic staff)	Faculty Student Services Office	• admission, readmission, and transfer • program and graduation requirements • course registration and withdrawal • university and faculty policies and procedures • academic difficulty
Program Advisors (Academic staff)	Departments	• programs and fields of specialization • course content • career planning • preparation for graduate study • recommendations for course substitutions, program electives, etc.
Associate Dean (Academic administrator)	Faculty Student Services Office	• academic difficulty • concerns of a sensitive nature

Table 5.2

Academic Advisors in the Faculty of Education by Position, Location, and Academic Advice Provided

Position	Location	Academic Advice Provided
Admissions/ Records Coordinators (Non-academic staff)	Office of Undergraduate Student Services	• admission, readmission, and transfer • program requirements • field experiences
Assistant Deans (Academic administrators)	Office of Undergraduate Student Services	• admission, readmission, and transfer (Assistant Dean--Admissions) • personal or academic difficulties (Assistant Dean--Student Services) • student teaching experiences (Assistant Dean--Field Experiences)
Professors (Academic staff)	Departments	• fields of study • preparation for graduate study • course content • program electives • career planning
Associate Dean (Academic administrator)	Office of Undergraduate Student Services	• complaints regarding process, policies, or practice • concerns of a sensitive nature

Table 5.3

Academic Advisors in the Faculty of Science by Position, Location, and Academic Advice Provided

Position	Location	Academic Advice Provided
Student Counsellors (Non-academic staff)	Faculty Office	• admission, readmission, and transfer • university and faculty policies and procedures • course selection • program requirements • transfer to other faculties • academic difficulty
Departmental Advisors (Academic and non-academic staff)	Departments	• specialization and honors degree program requirements • specialization and honors degree program course selection • preparation for graduate study • career planning
Associate Dean (Academic administrator)	Faculty Office	• academic difficulty • concerns of a sensitive nature

While no formal selection criteria for faculty members to become academic advisors were reported to exist, their selection was identified as being based on one or more of these aspects: (a) rotation of administrative duties, (b) knowledge about the academic program, and (c) talent or skill for advising. Selection was not an issue in one department studied because academic advising in a faculty member's area of expertise was considered to be part of the job. The following comments are representative of the three faculties studied:

> *Basically, the [advising duties] are assigned by the Chair of the department. For those members of the department, this is one of their [administrative] duties.*
>
> *It's always just been part of the job. We've had one or, in some cases, two advisors in each major and it's just been part of the job description.*
>
> *First, we talk about what areas [of study] we need people in, secondly, who would be good at that particular job, and thirdly, who has the time to do it. We think that is a better system than holding elections which take up time and you might get people in there that maybe don't want to do it.*
>
> *We make that decision based on who we feel best meets our vision for good advisors: student empathy, willingness to work with students, patience, and availability.*

Although there was agreement that knowledge of the curriculum and courses was an important selection criterion, one respondent indicated concern over selection of faculty members as academic advisors based on their position alone:

> *So many times people get into things by virtue of their position: 'You're going to do this, it's part of your job.' If students come in and they know that I hate doing this [academic advising], that there are ten other things I'd rather be doing, I'm not going to make a very good impression and I'm not going to be able to help them a whole lot. Unless I'm the kind of person who thinks this is important, worthwhile, and I actually enjoy it, then I don't think I am as helpful to students.*

Academic Advising Process

This section provides information on these aspects of the academic advising process: (a) communications to students regarding the availability of academic advising services, (b) access by students to academic advising services,

(c) academic advising for students in academic difficulty, and (d) the common approaches employed by some academic advisors.

Communications to Students

Students were reported to learn about academic advising services in both formal and informal ways in the faculties studied. The formal ways of informing students of the availability of academic advising were as follows: (a) statements made in the university calendar (Appendices E, F, and G), (b) faculty and department documents distributed to students at the time of admission and/or registration (Appendices H and I), and (c) information posted on bulletin boards.

The "student grapevine" was mentioned as an informal but significant communication mechanism by several respondents from each faculty. The following statements were made by academic advisors regarding the role of the student grapevine in communicating the availability of and access to academic advising.

> *We're just getting to the stage where the student grapevine is telling students who the advisors are and, depending on what major they are in, to go to a particular advisor. They are also learning that you can't play one against the other because we talk to each other too much.*

> *The student grapevine is incredible; I cannot believe how fast things get around. I've actually had students from other faculties that have come to me for advice that say, 'My friend's sister said that you are a good advisor, I'm trying to decide what to do here.' Whew, that is not what I do! But, I think students have a way of finding out who they get good advice from and who enjoys what they are doing and doesn't make it seem like a big burden.*

> *Students mostly come to see me through word of mouth. Word has got out that I will sit and listen and help students.*

Some respondents were concerned about the lack of objectivity and accuracy of the information in the student grapevine, while others considered that the practical and honest advice that students could provide one another was beneficial. These statements represent concern over this communication between students.

One of the things that is rampant at this institution is the rumor mill, particularly we notice it here because many, many of our students want to keep the opportunity open to apply to a [professional school]. They come in with these wonderful stories, all of them wrong. The problem is that the people that are spreading the rumors about what you have to do to get into Medicine are people who did not get into Medicine. You are not talking to somebody who was successful. If he wasn't successful, how come he is so expert on what to do?

I tell students, and I have it posted, 'Don't listen to anyone who is not paid to give advice.' A lot of students will come in and say, 'My friend told me I wouldn't graduate unless I have this course.' So I say, 'Read the sign!'

I also have to realize that there is advising that goes on from student to student. I sometimes wish I had more control over that. I mean that in the sense that the student advising tends to be more on emotional grounds, 'So and so was really good, or so and so was really bad'--that's perfectly legitimate information but there are other factors.

The following statements made by respondents indicate a more positive view of the exchange of information between students:

I think they get a lot of information from the [student government]. They get, in many ways, sound advice. You can come and ask me about particular classes but you would be better off asking 'Should I take this class from this person, this person, or this person?' and a student will give you an honest answer.

A lot of first-year and second-year students wander about and, other than by word of mouth, they don't know who will stop and talk to them.

For a student to find that out [that an exception could be made] would probably be almost impossible unless he got it by word of mouth.

[Students who have used services to improve their academic standing have said,] 'If anybody else wants me to say anything about this, tell them to come talk to me, give them my phone number, I'll be happy to talk to them.' So there's a bit of a student network there, which I think is good.

You get a lot of people that come by and say, 'Somebody told me that you'd help me.' Somebody's heard that somebody else has managed to do it [fulfill a program requirement] in a different way. In many instances, it's simple enough but they haven't asked the right questions.

When these changes [curricular or admissions requirements] go through within one faculty, a lot of times it takes longer for the information to get to us [the academic advisors] than it does to the students.

Access by Students

In each faculty, students were able to obtain academic advice from staff at a centralized academic advising office as well as from individual faculty members. Access to academic advisors in academic advising offices varied between the faculties and between types of academic advisors. These variations are discussed below.

Academic advisors in academic advising offices. While the academic advisors (non-academic staff) in the faculty offices performed much academic advising over the telephone--especially for newly admitted students--the access mechanisms for students to meet with them in-person varied.

The Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics required students to sign up for an appointment to see an academic advisor. A sign-up sheet was available with the receptionist at that office who would also ensure that the advice the student was seeking required meeting with an academic advisor from that office. Students signed up for a 15-minute interview unless the receptionist or the students considered that they would require more time in which case they could sign up for the next time frame as well. Academic advising occurred in the private office of the academic advisors in this office.

The Faculty of Education Office of Undergraduate Student Services provided academic advising on a drop-in basis. Similar to the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics, the receptionist in this office served as a "gatekeeper." She provided answers to some questions and then called upon the academic advisors for those she could not answer. At least one of the four Admissions/Records Coordinators was available at all times for advising students at the front desk. Students could make an appointment to see one of these academic

advisors, but that was not the norm. When students required more privacy for their questions, academic advisors would invite them to a more private area in that office. The Associate Dean and Assistant Deans were also available to advise students, however this was typically on an appointment basis within their private offices. Students experiencing personal crises did not require an appointment to see the Assistant Dean (Student Services), who was a chartered psychologist.

The Faculty of Science operated a drop-in system to see the "Student Counsellors." Again, the receptionists in this office were able to answer some of the students' questions and to advise them as to whom to see next. Students who were from out of town could make an appointment to see an advisor if necessary but this was not the normal access route.

The hours of operation for these academic advising offices are provided in Table 5.4.

Academic advisors who are faculty members. Faculty members made themselves available to students for academic advising in a variety of ways. Some posted the hours when they were available for drop-in academic advising. Others invited students to make appointments over the phone or through an appointment sheet posted on their office door. One faculty member indicated that students would often ask her questions when they would see her incidentally out of her office. During early registration in March, many faculty members increased their availability for academic advising of students recognizing the increased demand at that time of year.

Students in Academic Difficulty

Academic advising services were available to students experiencing academic difficulty in the faculties studied. In the university calendar, each faculty outlined its requirements for academic standing of undergraduate students in detail. (See the University of Alberta Calendar, 1995a, pp. 100-101, 171-172, 280-281.)

Table 5.4

Hours of Operation of the Faculty Academic Advising Offices in the Three Faculties

Faculty	**Hours of Operation Monday to Friday, Winter Session**
Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics	8:30 am to 12:00 pm, 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm
Education	8:30 am to 4:30 pm
Science	8:30 am to 12:00 pm, 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm

Some similarities and some differences were found in the advising received by students in academic difficulty in the faculties studied.

Both the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Science performed an academic record review of undergraduate students after each term of study. In the Faculty of Education, staff in the Office of Undergraduate Student Services sent a letter to students identifying any concerns and inviting them to come in to discuss them with an academic advisor. Students could choose not to utilize that advice. One academic advisor indicated that she believed that most of the students with an irregularity or problem identified through these letters had addressed it by the next record review. The Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics conducted a similar review but only after completion of Winter Session.

Students on academic probation in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics and the Faculty of Education were reported to often be required to meet with an academic advisor or to complete some other requirement as a condition of their probation. The following comments were made by an academic advisor from the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics, and from an academic advisor from the Faculty of Education:

> *I sat on the academic appeal committee for a half a day once. One of the things I was impressed with was that sometimes the student was required to meet with an academic advisor regularly or to take a course on getting through math or on writing exams.*

> *Those students that go on academic warning [i.e., probation] are required to sign an agreement and are also required to meet with [the Assistant Dean] to monitor their progress. They usually meet a couple of times a year with her, just to make sure they are on track, that they know the requirements that they have to fulfill, that they know the withdrawal deadlines if they're failing a course, that sort of thing.*

There was recognition among some respondents that academic ability was not always the cause of academic difficulty for students, but that personal problems were often involved. The following statement made by an academic advisor is representative:

> *In my years of doing this [academic advising], I don't think I can think of one instance where the student was in academic difficulty because he or she didn't have the IQ to cope with the load. It's always something else. It's a health problem, a personal problem, or a priorities problem. We try to identify the situation if we can and direct them to where the assistance is.*

Academic advisors in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics were reported to be called upon, in some cases, to provide any knowledge they had of the personal circumstances of students that related to their academic difficulty. One academic advisor from that faculty made this statement in that regard:

> *If academic advisors have a student who is going through personal difficulties, and something about it might come up in an academic appeal, they can verify that the student didn't just pull this out of the air.*

Students were acknowledged by respondents as sometimes approaching academic advisors for advice on their own regarding concerns about their academic standing:

> *[Requests for advice about academic strategies] are usually worded by a student who is getting into academic difficulty. The calculus course is a killer for that. That is not my strength, so I direct them to where the help is. The mathematics department has a list of tutorials or a list of graduate students that will perform private tutoring for a fee. We try to direct them to where the appropriate help is on campus.*

> *We have some that come in and basically volunteer: 'I'm really struggling. I thought I wanted to me a math teacher but I'm bombing my math classes.' In some cases it's just a matter of reassuring them and saying 'Look at the marks, when you look at the averages you'll notice that they are 4.2, so your 5.3 is not all that bad.'*

> *Students come in and they are having trouble studying or they don't know how to study, they flunk all their mid-terms, and want to know what is happening. I can always send them to the places on campus for advice. I often give them a few little tips and say 'this really helped me.'*

The "University 100" course in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics was reported by respondents in that faculty to play a

preventative role in terms of advising students on how to avoid academic difficulty.

> *In the University 100 orientation course, [the instructor] is really trying to stress to incoming students that if you are experiencing problems, don't wait until the end of the year, come in and talk to us early.*
>
> *[We have a goal] to keep the "required to withdraws" in the first-years down to less than 10% and this year we're under 4%. As is typical, there are a number of factors that go into this--part of it is the notion of the students taking control of their programs. Does that mean to say that students are not having problems? No, the point is that they now have the tools to learn to cope. They also recognize that there is no point beating your brains out in a course you are going to flunk.*

Approaches to Academic Advising

Many respondents made statements that communicated a philosophy of academic advising or an approach to academic advising. Three themes were apparent in analysis: (a) responsibility for students' academic programs, (b) importance of positive relationships between advisors and students, and (c) assistance to students in accessing further information. A description of these themes, supplemented with representative quotations, follows.

Responsibility for students' academic programs. Differences were found between the levels of responsibility assumed by the faculties for ensuring that academic programs of students were progressing appropriately. Respondents from the Faculty of Education made statements that indicated the most proactive approach of the three faculties for identifying students in need of academic or personal advising. Three respondents from the Faculty of Education identified the skill of one non-academic staff member in identifying students who were in crisis and then requiring them to see one of the Assistant Deans or the Associate Dean. In several of these cases, the students were in extremely serious personal circumstances and were able to benefit greatly from the contact with the Assistant Dean (Student Services), who was a chartered psychologist. The Assistant Dean

reported communication from instructors who were concerned about students whom they believed were in personal difficulty. The following statement was made regarding the phone calls made to these students:

> *Somebody [an instructor] will come by and say 'There's somebody in my class I'm really worried about. She was really energetic the first half of the term and she has looked really sad the last three weeks.' Then I get the job of phoning these students at 6:00 p.m., because that's usually the time they're home. You can't phone during the day because they are here. I say 'Hello' explain who I am and say, 'I'm just phoning because your prof is worried about you.' I expect them to say 'Get out of my life' and hang up. Nobody has.*

Two respondents from the Faculty of Education indicated concern that sometimes too much was being done for students regarding program planning. Statements made by these academic advisors are provided below.

> *I find there is a lot more hand-holding in our faculty and I don't think that's particularly a good thing. It takes the responsibilities off the students which is where it should be. It's their program, their degree, they should take primary responsibility for it and we are here as resources. University students are adults and I don't know that treating them like children who need to be led everywhere is very good for them. I don't think it's good for prospective teachers.*

> *You will have students that will come in and just plunk down and say 'Figure out my schedule.' You learn to read who they are, encourage them to get started, work on it, and come back.*

Statements made by advisors in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics indicated a proactive approach to providing students with the tools to "take control of their own program." A main objective of the "University 100" course offered in that faculty is to provide students with the information that they will need to succeed early in their program. The onus is placed on the students for their programs, as verified by the following statements made by advisors within that faculty.

> *You are paying $2,500 in tuition fees plus all of this, you have every right to demand an education but we also have the right to demand that you give it the due attention we think you should. The message I give them is 'take control of your own program.' I'm a bit concerned about monitoring students because maybe it gives the impression of 'big brother' during the term. The first term can be*

very traumatic for the first-year students, but basically I work on the notion that 'People are there to help you if you want it, but it's your responsibility to ask.' We'd love to have every student go to see an advisor. I'm not one to force systems down people's throats because I think they should maintain a certain amount of independence. There are some that say 'C'mon, they're adults. Read the calendar.' Up to a point that is true, but there are so many ways of getting an education, how the students approach their education, how they feel about it, how they feel about the university.

Some academic staff think that 'You're in university, you're a big girl or a big boy, you don't need to be told what to do if you're flunking out of school.' But I remember being a first-year university student and, as sure as you think you are, it's a scary situation.

Some students come in and want to graduate in a given year and suddenly discover that they have really screwed it up. The sympathy is really quite low if they've never seen an advisor before. You do what you can but you really can't keep pulling someone out of the fire.

I would like to see that they can't get on the telephone registration system unless an academic advisor has put the code in for them after they have seen the advisor. That's one way of sort of forcing the issue, but at the same time the calendar says registration is the responsibility of the student. How far do you go in spoon-feeding?

Within the Faculty of Science the responsibilities for student programs varied across departments and across degree types, that is, general, specialization, or honors degrees. Each department took primary responsibility for the advising of the students in its specialization and honors degrees. The Faculty Office had primary responsibility for advising students in the general degree programs. Because of this decentralized system, it is difficult to attribute a single philosophical approach to academic advising in the Faculty of Science. Respondents from this faculty provided a variety of opinions on the level of responsibility that students hold for their programs.

I think that's the biggest problem: students coming in with problems that should have been nipped in the bud. A year ago, it would have been easy to handle but has become serious now. I don't know whose responsibility that is.

This is your responsibility, we are treating you as an adult, and treating you as an adult means we leave you alone unless you tell us you want some help.

We don't have the time or resources to check student records [at the department level]. They are big kids, they should realize when they are in trouble. If they want to come and talk to me or another advisor, they are welcome to do so and occasionally do, but we don't see a lot of that. That is, we wouldn't initiate that, phone a student up and say 'You really bombed your organic chemistry, you better come and talk to me.'

I think forcing [specialization degree] students to see their advisor is a big improvement, based on our problems in the past. Students would come and receive their 'permission to register' letter and there was no incentive for them to see their advisor and there was no one going through and saying, 'Oh, you haven't taken course X yet, let's make sure you get that in your timetable.' So I think that is a big improvement right there.

Importance of positive relationships between advisors and students. Academic advisors in each of the faculties expressed a belief in the importance of a positive personal relationship between advisor and student. The following statements were made by academic advisors with various roles from each of the three faculties.

For both those students that read and understand the calendar and those who don't, human advising is really necessary.

Being friendly and helpful and giving [students] a face to attach to the university can do a lot to help in calming fears and easing the transition both for high school students and for people who have been out of school for awhile.

Although it's [the university] a learning environment, it's a very impersonal learning environment. If you're working for an organization like that, it's hard to be an advisor to students.

Part of the point is that the advisors and advisees get to know each other. It sort of defeats that if I answer every question for them.

I tell students I do 'anti-freak therapy' and have comic relief handouts, too. I think when they're really stressed a lot of them walk away saying, 'Thanks for making me laugh.'

In my experience one of the things that is difficult at this big institution and needs to be maintained is some sort of human contact with the student. All the information I know is in the calendar, anybody can read it if they want. Somehow talking to somebody about it seems helpful.

This is kind of a good year for me because I will have seen a lot of students go from start to finish and it's hard for me to believe--I call them all my kids. I'm going to go to the graduation ceremonies this year.

The most important thing is that they see me out of my office 99% of the time. I think that really helps in comfort levels, you don't come across as an administrator but you're someone to help.

Student advising is built on trust. If the students don't trust the individual, they'll [only] come and talk to him or her once. My concern is that the personal touch is there.

My chief goal is that we give them the impression that we're human. We're not gods and goddesses and we should not be treated as such. The elitist atmosphere at the University of Alberta has gone on for too long and it hurts us.

I've always thought I need to stick a needle in my finger on the first day of class and drop some blood on the overhead projector and say, 'See, I am human.'

Assistance to students in accessing further information. Several academic advisors indicated that they would make efforts to facilitate students' access to other sources of information or services. The following statements were made by academic advisors with various roles in all three faculties:

If a student wants to know how late such and such an office is open, it doesn't take two seconds to call and find out. I do a lot of those kinds of things that aren't job-related. People frown at me for that but I just think that if they [the students] can find my office, I'm going to give them all the help they can get.

[Students could] do a lot of running around but it's easier to pick up the phone and say, 'I've got so and so, here's her name or here's his name, they're on their way over.' That sort of facilitates things that way. We don't try to make their lives miserable, it just happens sometimes. We just try to help out where we can.

I should say too that a lot of my activity does not only deal with advising them up front of the red-tape kinds of issues but also trying to patch things up after they've been through them.

Often I'll phone the advisor and say 'I'm sending the student down to see you, do you have time now?' So that the student doesn't then say 'Now, how do I get in touch with this professor?'

Sometimes I'll call over to Student Counselling Services. I'll have heard from a previous student that there is a two-week wait and I'll call over and say 'Is this true?' If they say yes, then I'll say, 'Well,

you can go and make an appointment, but I would really go and check this, this, and this place out as well.'

In summary, the Faculty of Education took the most proactive approach to academic advising in terms of identifying students with a problem of some kind in their program and a fairly intrusive approach to identifying and helping students in personal difficulty. Concerns of some respondents over the extent to which "hand-holding" occurred in that faculty were noted. The Faculty of Agriculture considered its responsibility to be to alert students to the availability of advising but not to force it on them. Because decentralized academic advising occurred within the Faculty of Science, it was difficult to identify a single approach to academic advising, but generally, this faculty placed the greatest onus on the students for learning about and accessing academic advising. A significant number of academic advisors felt that a positive interpersonal relationship between advisors and students was important, as was making an effort to assist students as they attempt to access other services within the faculty or university.

Additional Delivery Models in Use

Other delivery models for academic advising exist in addition to the individual academic advising described above. Forms of self-advising, computer-assisted advising, group advising, and course advising were in use in the three faculties. They are each described briefly in this section.

Self-advising

An academic calendar is published annually by the university and is provided to both students and staff. Such publications by the university, the faculties, or the departments are considered a method of "self-advising," that is, answers to many questions of students are contained in these documents which are widely available for students to read. Appearing on the second page of the University of Alberta's 1995-1996 academic calendar is the following statement:

> Students are responsible for the completeness and accuracy of their registrations and for completion of the specified program requirements. This requires careful attention to course selection and compliance with prerequisite and corequisite requirements. Please read the Calendar carefully and use it when you register. If in doubt about the regulations pertaining to your program, consult the appropriate University official.

The university calendar contains vast amounts of information relevant to the academic concerns of undergraduate students. Faculties and departments also reported making information specific to their programs available for students in the form of brochures, information sheets, letters, etc.

Computer-assisted Advising

A computerized system intended to improve students' information on their academic progress and requirements has been in limited use at the university in recent years. The Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Education had made some use of this system. Students received a printout, called a STAR report, of the courses they had taken and those remaining to be completed according to the program in which they were registered.

Group Advising

Two types of group advising delivery models were found to be in use in the faculties studied: advisor-led group advising in the Faculty of Education and peer-led group advising in the Faculty of Science.

Advisor-led group advising. The Faculty of Education offered group advising sessions for students in each year of study. These sessions were held early in the academic year and were advertised via bulletin boards and word of mouth. The sessions were led by one of the Assistant Deans and one Admissions/Records Coordinator. Their intent was to communicate to students the program and degree requirements, special considerations for that specific year of study, and availability of further academic advice.

Peer-led group advising. The Faculty of Science has coordinated a peer-led group advising system for its new students for three years (1992-1993, 1993-1994, and 1994-1995). It is called the "Cohort Mentor Program" and is coordinated and facilitated by an academic advisor (non-academic staff) from the Faculty of Science. Participation in this program is voluntary both on the part of the peer advisors and the first-year students. This unique delivery system is described in terms of (a) its objectives, (b) the selection and training of peer advisors, (c) participation by first-year students, and (d) the nature of the advising that occurs within the program. Four peer advisors and the academic advisor responsible for this program were interviewed in this study. Their statements supplement the description provided in this section.

The formal goal of the program was identified to be lowering the attrition rate for first-year students in the Faculty of Science by making them feel less isolated and by making them aware of information thought to be important for success. The following representative statements were made by respondents:

> *It is just to help them get over that initial shock, help them get used to the university, help them make friends, feel more welcome here.*

> *We're not there as tutors but more as big brothers and big sisters. If a student is having a problem finding some information or finding out where to go for advice, that's what we are there for. We were just there to get people started in the first term of their first year.*

The peer advisors are drawn from Faculty of Science students who are on the "Dean's List," that is, have a grade point average of 7.5 or higher. Accompanying a congratulatory letter from the Dean is an invitation to become a peer advisor. Approximately 800 letters are sent out with an estimated 80 of these students agreeing to participate. There had been some discussion about whether these academically successful students were necessarily the best group to be peer advisors:

> *There are so many good students out there who may not be on the Dean's List but who could give so much good advice, but it's just*

because we don't have enough first-years participating for all those Mentors [peer advisors]. We had to limit it somehow and that was the easiest way of doing it.

Two of the peer advisors interviewed held differing views from one another on the question of who should be approached to be advisors:

It's sort of providing a role model even though it's not an obvious one. If they see that there are people out there who are getting good marks but not killing themselves, still having some fun, doing some sports activities and stuff like that, it makes them think that they could too.

Probably targeting people with a high GPA isn't always a good way of [recruiting peer advisors] because you could just get people who have been stuck in a library for years. I know I was stuck in a library for a few years. Hopefully, I'm not quite as bad as some of them. Some people might be better at this sort of thing and yet they are eliminated.

Two information sessions were held prior to the beginning of the term for the peer advisors. They could attend either session as the information provided was the same. The coordinator reviewed the purpose and the nature of the program as well as the role of the peer advisors. He provided them with written information regarding different rules and regulations, the various services available, and other information that new students might seek. An opportunity was provided for discussion and sharing of experiences between peer advisors. Also at that time, peer advisors identified the time and place that they were available to meet with a group of students on a weekly basis. Some peer advisors chose to lead groups together.

The program coordinator sent letters to all newly admitted students that included information about the Cohort Mentor Program and how to get involved. Prior to commencement of classes, during the two days when students pick up their timetables and student cards, a Cohort Mentor Program booth was set up and attended by the program coordinator. First-year students having just received their timetable were able to compare their available times with those of the peer advisors. The first-year students would sign up for one of those meeting times and locations.

Students who wanted to participate but had not signed up at the booth were able to do so at the Faculty Office. This was communicated to them in the letter they had received regarding the program.

There were usually between four and eight first-year students per group, unless groups combined. The program coordinator stated that approximately 250 first-year students participated but a greater rate of participation was desired.

While first-year students knew the time and place of their first group meeting upon signing up for the program, two of the respondents said that they phoned the students in their group to remind them. Meetings would last approximately one hour and were held weekly until the students either suggested the meetings stop or the students ceased to attend. Some groups met only once while at least one continued on until the end of the first term.

According to the four peer advisors interviewed as well as the program's coordinator, the group meetings were informal and unstructured. The peer advisors reported providing the most structure in the first meeting. Each stated that they tried to respond to the needs of their group members by providing the information that they requested. The following statements made by the peer advisors interviewed demonstrated that differing approaches were used in leading these groups:

> *During the third meeting the group just started carrying on as if I wasn't there. That was exactly what I wanted. I said, "So, do you guys need me anymore?" and they said, "No, we don't", so I said, "Okay, you have my phone number." I would tell them where I would usually be first thing in the morning and said, "So, if you need to come and see me, you can do that." Every once in a while one of the students would show up.*

> *One of them had a problem finding some place, even on the map. So we designed a scavenger hunt for them which took us a little bit of time. We divided them into two teams, we left little clues all around campus, and they had to go to different places and find different departments. There was a prize for the group that won.*

> *It was pretty slow. I think we probably could have been more organized to come up with things to do. One thing with coming to university is they don't want to have a structured little program to follow, so you don't want to be condescending.*

One time I said, "Let's all go get our shoe tags [athletic facility passes] together." But two of them already had, so I told the others just to go and do it too.

Some variation existed in the types of information that peer advisors provided to first-year students. Each of the following types of advice was mentioned by at least one of the peer advisors interviewed:

1. study skills, exam writing, time management;
2. content of courses and labs;
3. location of buildings, campus lay out;
4. transfer to professional faculties;
5. program planning with emphasis on alternate plans for students who are not able to transfer later;
6. career planning, Career and Placement Services;
7. library services;
8. recreation and athletic services;
9. university services in general;
10. protocol for complaints regarding professors, marks, etc.;
11. how to approach professors;
12. social life and extracurricular activities; and
13. where to find further information or help.

Course Advising

The Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics has required first-year students with fewer than 24 credit units at the university level to take an orientation course titled "University 100." This course has existed for the past two academic years (1993-1994 and 1994-1995). All students who enrolled in the faculty after September 1993 must complete this credit course in order to graduate. The Associate Dean (Academic Programs), who coordinated the course, indicated that it was constantly evolving and improving in its format and content. While the

1994-1995 course outline and the course schedule provide a more detailed description (Appendices I and J), a summary of the philosophy, goals, and content of the course are presented here.

The "University 100" course outline stated that there are "specific interactions both inside and outside the classroom [that] are known to bring increased student satisfaction, personal growth, academic achievement, and reduced student withdrawals." The philosophy underlying the existence of "University 100" is as follows:

> First year students succeed in their university programs when they make progress toward fulfilling their educational and personal goals by:
>
> 1. developing academic and intellectual competence,
> 2. developing a personal and professional identity,
> 3. developing an integrated philosophy of life,
> 4. maintaining personal health and wellness,
> 5. establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships, and
> 6. deciding on a career and lifestyle.

Goals of "University 100" in 1994-1995 were identified as:

1. To develop a feeling of "belongingness" to the Faculty and the University of Alberta.
2. To provide students with learning experiences to obtain knowledge and practical skills that will enable them to succeed in university.
3. To develop a familiarity, and foster user comfort, with services on campus.
4. To develop and further awareness of the need to take responsibility as a student.
5. To foster self confidence and self esteem in the learning environment.

The course was conducted over a ten-week period in the first term of the last two academic years. According to the course schedule for "University 100," the following areas were addressed:

1. students clubs;
2. library services;
3. career planning;
4. CD ROM research skills;

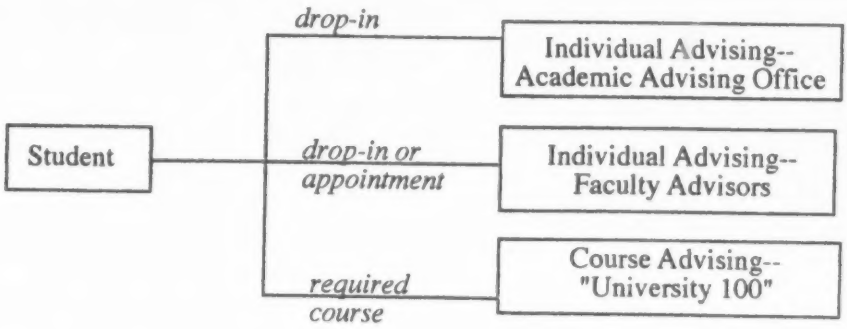
5. health education;
6. study skills;
7. time, money, and stress management;
8. program regulations (especially regarding academic difficulty);
9. program committees (faculty academic advisors); and
10. "A Day in the Life of a University Professor."

Summary

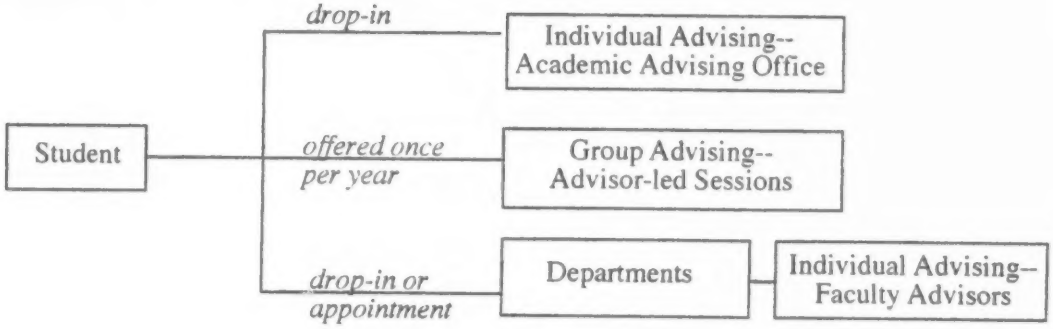
Several aspects of the delivery of academic advising in the three faculties studied were presented in this chapter.

The institutional roles of those performing academic advising and their areas of academic advising expertise were similar in the three faculties. Formal and informal communication systems were in use to alert students to the availability of academic advising services. The "student grapevine" was thought to be a significant informal communication system by several of the respondents. Some variation was noted in access to academic advisors in central offices and to those who were faculty members. Several respondents placed great importance on positive advisor-student relationships and assistance to students in accessing further information and services. Variation was noted in the degree to which students were considered to be responsible for their academic programs in the three faculties. A number of additional delivery systems were identified to exist within the faculties studied although individual advising was considered the primary delivery model for academic advising. These additional delivery models were computer-assisted, group, course, and self advising. Figure 5.1 on the following page summarizes the delivery of academic advising by faculty in terms of its availability and access.

Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics



Faculty of Education



Faculty of Science

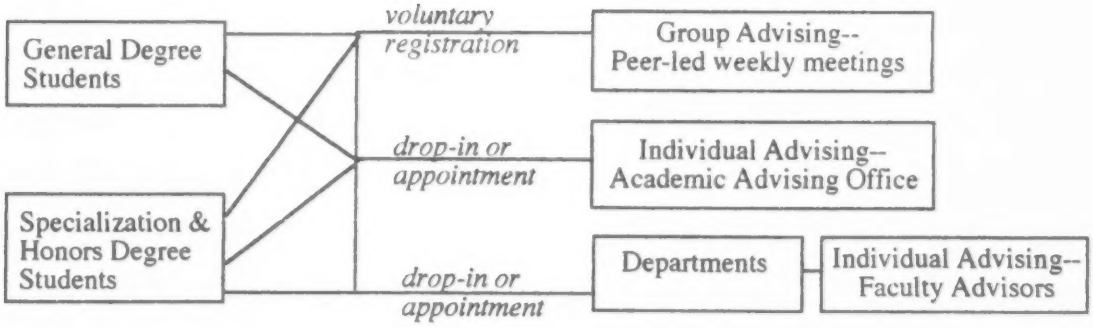


Figure 5.1 Availability of and access to academic advising for undergraduate students in the three faculties

Chapter 6

PERCEPTIONS OF EFFECTIVENESS

Introduction

The fourth research question is addressed in this chapter: "What are the perceptions of effectiveness of academic advising?" This includes attention to these associated sub-questions: (a) "What are the perceptions of the effectiveness of the organization of academic advising?" (b) "What are the perceptions of the effectiveness of the delivery of academic advising?" and (c) "What suggestions can be made for improving current academic advising?"

Effectiveness of the Organization of Academic Advising

Although statements regarding the effectiveness of the organization of academic advising were limited, general agreement was evident that the decentralized organizational model at the University of Alberta was appropriate. That is, respondents believed that the most effective approach was for academic advising to be organized and delivered at the faculty level in accordance with the unique needs of the faculties and their students.

Effectiveness of the Delivery of Academic Advising

Discussions of effectiveness centred on the delivery of academic advising. The following topics were mentioned by respondents and are presented in this section: (a) access to academic advising, (b) courtesy and consistency in academic advising, (c) faculty members as academic advisors, (d) additional delivery models in use, and (e) evaluation of academic advising services.

Access to Academic Advising

In-person academic advice was available on both a drop-in basis and an appointment basis in the faculties studied. Faculty members who were academic

advisors made these statements regarding their accessibility and their perceptions of its relative effectiveness:

> *If you put things with the [faculty members who are] academic advisors, you run the problem of them not being available. That can be a problem. I have voice mail and I always do my best to get back to people in a short period of time and we can set up an appointment. I think that works about as well as can be expected. Alternatively though, the front-line of defense could be with the Student Services Office or the Dean's Office and there would always be some one there. I guess what I really worry about is student access and students with problems, usually they are right at the deadline and they need some quick answers, and I happen to be in a meeting or in class. That would be one of the biggest things I would like to see improved but I'm not sure how to improve that knowing that we want [faculty members to be] academic advisors, and I think we do.*

> *Most of them [faculty members who advise] run an open door policy. If they are in, they'll answer the question. The difficulty with making appointments is it takes longer to make the appointment sometimes than to answer the question. In most instances, the question can be answered very quickly, then the students can move on.*

Non-academic staff who are academic advisors in centralized offices in the faculties studied made statements regarding their perceptions of the effectiveness of drop-in versus appointment access to advisors. A respondent from an office that used a drop-in system said that since students' questions take different amounts of time to address, the drop-in system meant less "down-time" between meetings with students. Students wishing to see an advisor could make their own decisions about whether or not they had the time to wait.

> *I guess the only problem with the drop-in system is when it gets really busy. Sometimes the wait [to see an advisor] can be really long. For the most part it seems to go quite well; most students are happy with it. The fact that they can just come in anytime and they don't have to ask to make an appointment at a certain time, or worry about missing it, or [being delayed] if the person ahead of them takes too long. I think they do like it.*

Another respondent from an advising office which used an appointment system thought that it communicated that the time of the advisors was valuable as well as the time of the students. Students "did their homework" before the

meeting, that is, they were prepared to ask good questions and to make good use of the time with an advisor.

> *The one thing I've really noticed since we've started having actual appointments [is that] they are prepared. Before they used to come in and say, 'Oh, I don't really know what I want.' It was kind of hard to help them. Now some come in with a list of questions that they want to ask you. Before [with a drop-in system] they weren't prepared, now they are. This way they know that time is scheduled for them. Actually, a lot of students have commented that they really like that.*

Some academic advisors indicated concern over students experiencing the "run around" when seeking information from a variety of sources:

> *By the time you get students who have been bounced around that much, they are starting out in a much less friendly state of mind than they need to. Often something that is really a small problem becomes a bigger problem because they feel like they have been handed off to someone.*

> *I would like to see a little more streamlining for students to know what to see academic advisors [who are faculty members] about. I've had students, they would wait three days for the appointment, then come and I have to say 'You'll have to go down to the office and get the form signed there, because we don't do that here. I can tell you about it or answer some questions, but you are still going to have to go to another place.'*

A peer advisor from the Faculty of Science made this statement regarding access:

> *Sometimes you literally have to go across campus. I had to go between the General Services Building and the main office to talk to advisors to get a timetable straightened up. The access to the advisors is excellent [but] the thing I found to be an inconvenience is having the advisors in different places.*

Courtesy and Consistency in Academic Advising

Academic advisors in each faculty, within every organizational role, including peer advisors, made comments regarding the importance of courtesy and consistency in the delivery of academic advising. Representative statements made about courtesy shown toward students who were seeking academic advice are provided below.

> *One of the things needed is an attitude adjustment. Please treat these students like people. Remember that they are part of our bread and butter. They are coming to us because they don't know. They are not coming to bug us.*
>
> *[An improvement would be] reminding some offices of the benefit of a lot of courtesy toward students. I've been a student at this university too and I have found as a student that dealing with some offices and some people is a lot easier than dealing with others. Some of the staff people are often quite rude. Students know who these people are. I find in many offices little action is taken to improve that.*

When asked to reflect on their own experiences seeking academic advice as students, two peer advisors reported being treated in a "condescending, rude, and impatient" manner. Both indicated that they would prefer to "figure it out on their own" (their academic concern) than receive such treatment.

Consistency of the academic advice provided to students was considered to be crucial by the academic advisors interviewed. Respondents made the following representative statements regarding consistency:

> *Sometimes within departments they can become creative in their interpretations of the regulations. The thing we are concerned about is inconsistent interpretation of the rules because it is basically unfair to other students who maybe didn't whine as loud.*
>
> *We really strive to have the advisors talk to each other as well as the students so that we're all telling the same story. The worst thing we can have is students who come in and try to play one advisor against another to try to get around rules and regulations.*
>
> *Some advisors [who are faculty members] are more reliable than others. You come to recognize the initial on the form--some of them are willing to accept anything [in terms of changing program requirements]. You have to watch.*

A peer advisor, reflecting on her own experiences as a student, made the following statement regarding consistency of academic advice:

> *The thing I have found, maybe it's because the faculty is just so big, is that you can go and talk to advisors and still get the wrong information. It can be frustrating, you get different advice from the general advisor than you do from the honors advisor, and different advice than you get from the main office.*

Faculty Members as Academic Advisors

Several respondents who were faculty members chose to identify their strengths as academic advisors compared with those of the non-academic staff advisors. All respondents who spoke on this topic remained highly respectful of the knowledge and abilities possessed by their counterparts in the delivery of academic advising. They indicated that the role of non-academic staff for providing academic advice was also important. The following statements were made by respondents who were faculty members or academic administrators:

> *There are a lot of routine things that are pretty high-priced help if a full professor is taking care of it. [The non-academic staff in our faculty] take on a lot of the routine stuff and then if problems arise, they pass them on, and we have a way of influencing what the routine things should or shouldn't be. That seems to work all right. I like the combination.*

> *Our belief is that it's got to be the academics [doing the advising] because they know the courses, should also know the areas of interest of the students, should know career opportunities, 'should' better than say a non-academic.*

> *This is why we want to keep advising in the departments. Students are being advised by a professional [in their field] and stand a much better chance than being advised by some other worthy individual who might not have the direct experience.*

> *The kind of information that students need, even if they don't know they need it, is not information that the instructor has the knowledge to give. I think it's probably not unreasonable or inaccurate to say that most faculty members really do not know programs very well. Even advisors in the departments will know their own piece of it, but not the whole thing.*

The benefit for students of having the same faculty member as an academic advisor throughout their program was recognized by several respondents. Threats to continuity for faculty members as academic advisors were identified to be study leaves, changes to committee assignments or administrative responsibilities, and other requirements of faculty members that could take them out of the academic advising role for a period of time, such as research activities. The following comments are representative of this concern for continuity of academic advisors:

In the university system, you're in a job [as an academic administrator] for three years. In the first year you don't know a lot, in the second year you're getting there, in the third you know it [academic advising information] but you're going. An inefficient system but I like it better run by academics and not some other kind of administrator.

I think we should have as much continuity as possible as to who the advisors are. Normally, we change committee jobs fairly frequently and if we're going to use this model of faculty advising, that kind of committee system is not the ideal. Not just because it disrupts the relationship you might have developed but also, there are a lot of technicalities involved which I'm just learning, it's only my second year in the job.

What's the 'best before date', the 'useful shelf life' of an academic advisor? We've argued and discussed it. It takes a few years just to get comfortable and, really, then you start to enjoy doing it.

We have decided that it is pretty important to have continuity within the [advising] committee so that we don't have all new people in there at the same time but have some veterans as well.

Additional Delivery Models

While individual advising was the primary delivery model for academic advising in the faculties studied, each made academic advising available to students in additional ways. Statements were made by respondents regarding the effectiveness of the additional delivery models that were in use in their faculty.

Self-advising. The effectiveness of the University of Alberta Calendar as a communicator of academic information was mentioned by several respondents from each of the three faculties studied. In general, respondents acknowledged that the organization and readability of the calendar had been improved in recent years but that it remained a complex document. One stated that it served as a legal contract between the institution and the students and therefore it had to be extremely comprehensive and detailed. While efforts are made by the university to make the calendar more readable, several respondents indicated that the bulk of information that they provided students was an interpretation of information in the calendar. Because of this complexity, the calendar was viewed as a relatively ineffective method of communicating academic information to students. The statements

provided below are representative of respondents' comments regarding the effectiveness of the academic calendar:

> *I think the calendar could be made more user-friendly. It's okay for me, it's part of my job to learn the calendar. I think it must be very daunting for students to try and find the information on particular details.*
>
> *We have, just in this last year, rewritten most of our calendar descriptions because we had some unwritten rules that we decided we should make written. The difficulty with that is that, in some ways, it makes it more complicated, but on the other hand, if these really are things that we are doing, it seems we ought to tell the students that we are doing them.*
>
> *One of the things that we have done that has made advising very much easier is: we have rewritten the calendar in a very major way so that it is now very clearly presented and simplified. All they need to do is to look at the calendar and their program requirements, the requirements are all very clearly laid out. This makes a huge difference in students' information, their likelihood of making mistakes in their selection of courses, and, of course, it makes it much easier for us.*

Computer-assisted advising. A computer-assisted academic advising system has been in limited use at the university in recent years. The Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Education had both made some use of this system. Students received a printout of the courses they had taken to date and those remaining to be completed according to the program they were registered in. These "STAR Reports" were met with mixed reviews. They were reported to be inaccurate and difficult to understand, especially in programs where curricula had recently been changed or exceptions to program requirements were routinely made. The time requirement to enter all of the data, just as a new student information system was to be implemented at the university, also contributed to the limited use of the system, according to several respondents. Some thought that these computerized reports were useful at least to notify students of their academic progress and hopefully motivate them to give increased attention to their program planning. This comment by a non-academic advisor is representative of those made by respondents in this study:

> *They produced STAR reports several years ago as a trial run and gave it to everyone and found it to be full of errors. It was abandoned very quickly. They put a lot of effort in over the past year and a half or so to try to get them operational. Last year we gave them out to first-year students only. They are very intimidating, are too long, and there's far too much information. A lot of students just look at the beginning of it and are baffled, so they don't read it.*

Advisor-led group advising. The Faculty of Education offers group advising sessions intended to communicate to students the program and degree requirements, special considerations for that specific year of study, and availability of further academic advice. Students approaching the practicum/student-teaching portion of their program were the best attendees of these group advising sessions. Otherwise, attendance has been very low and consideration was being given to discontinuing this delivery model. An academic administrator from this faculty made this statement regarding the group advising model:

> *We organize them for September and we put signs all over. I did the one for the after degree students. We must admit 150 after degree students, but 7 showed up for the orientation. We try. The problem is the students don't even know enough to know what they don't know. They could have personalized service, if they just went to the meeting to find out.*

Peer-led group advising. The "Cohort Mentor Program" in the Faculty of Science was the only formalized peer advising delivery model in the three faculties studied. The academic advisor who coordinated the program reported several improvements over the three years of its operation but that first-year participation remained relatively low. Respondents from that faculty agreed that such an advising system was beneficial, especially in helping new students to develop friendships. Some questions were raised as to whether students who were on the Dean's List were necessarily the best peer advisors based on that qualification alone. A faculty member indicated the following concern about how effectively social connections could be established in the program when students did not otherwise see one another:

The major problem has to do with time tabling. It's all very well to say these folks are a 'cohort,' but if they only have one course section in common, then they don't develop that bond very easily.

Course advising. "University 100," the required orientation course for new students in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics, was reported to have evolved significantly during its short history. Challenges in offering this course advising model were identified: (a) student resistance to a mandatory course without a mark, (b) the fee assessed for the class, and (c) content concerns. All of these were being addressed, according to the respondent who had responsibility for the course. He made the following statement regarding the benefits of "University 100," one of which he believed to be a lower attrition rate across the faculty:

Does that mean to say that students are not having problems? No. The point is that now they have the tools to learn to cope. Those kinds of things are the little steps that really make a difference.

Evaluation of Academic Advising Services

No formal evaluation of academic advising services in any of the faculties studied had been conducted. However, at the institutional level, an annual survey regarding aspects of the university experiences of graduating undergraduate students had been administered since 1992. The 1993 survey contained a question regarding satisfaction with academic advising services. Findings of this survey identified a general dissatisfaction with academic advising services among all the faculties (24% satisfied, 27% neutral, and 49% dissatisfied; n=1,086).

Two respondents from the same faculty provided comments about evaluation of academic advising services by students:

There is some way that students are getting through successfully. When they have finished their program they have the right courses, they're graduating without a glitch, but the Graduand Survey is showing dissatisfaction with advising. So there is something that we are not giving them. I don't know what it is that they are not getting that they think they need, except maybe some personal contact with a faculty member. What I would like

to do is to start some kind of focus group and see if we can get better in touch with what it is that students want. We don't know what it is that we're not giving.

In terms of the [effectiveness of] advising per se, I'm perhaps not the person to ask, maybe the students are the ones to ask what we could do to improve things. I think there are some that would say, 'not very much,' and occasional dissatisfied customers who would probably make a list as long as your arm.

A respondent from another faculty indicated a great value placed on informal student feedback:

Students are among my best advisors too. I emphasize to them that I am very receptive to constructive criticism. They can't [just] complain, they have to offer suggestions as to how to make it better.

While no formal evaluation of academic advisors was reported to occur, one faculty member indicated that academic advising by faculty members was recognized and valued in her faculty. She made this statement:

Our faculty evaluation assessments don't just say 'so-and-so is an advisor,' but they actually take the time to talk to the [staff in the centralized academic advising office] to find out if the advisors are actually doing a good job. Are they active advisors or do they just have their name on the list because it looks good? They've done a tremendous job of really sorting out who the advisors are, so I don't think people can get the idea that they can take this job and get credit for it and not put anything into it, which really makes me happy.

Suggestions to Improve Academic Advising

Some respondents presented the following suggestions for activities at the university and faculty levels that could better support academic advising activities occurring in the faculties.

1. Improve readability of the calendar.

2. Increase the courtesy shown to students seeking academic advising services on campus.

3. Ensure accuracy and consistency of academic information provided to students.

4. Develop common first-year time tables allowing students to have classes with the same group of students throughout a term. The assumption is that students will become more socially integrated, that is, make more friends, during their first year of university.

5. Implement a peer advising system, similar to that in the Faculty of Science, across the institution. The respondent felt this would be particularly valuable during registration and the first few weeks of a student's first year.

6. Provide more opportunities for sharing of approaches toward the organization and delivery of academic advising services between the faculties.

7. Provide more opportunities for academic advisors to become better informed about the services available on campus for students.

8. Faculties or departments should take the initiative to summarize and better present their academic information in a brochure or handbook form as an alternative to the more complex academic calendar.

9. Develop further university support for mandatory academic advising courses.

Summary

Discussions of effectiveness of academic advising and the improvements that could be made were presented in this chapter.

General agreement existed among the respondents that the faculties should house the academic advising services for their students rather than it being organized at the university level. Centralized academic advising offices where non-academic staff provide academic advice in combination with faculty members designated as advisors in the relevant departments or program areas was considered to be an effective organizational structure for academic advising.

Discussions by respondents of the effectiveness of the delivery of academic advising were more specific than discussions of the effectiveness of its

organization. There were differing views on which method--drop-in or appointment--was more effective for students to obtain access to individual academic advisors. Concerns were raised about students sometimes experiencing the "run around" when they were seeking academic information. The level of courtesy received by students from some university staff was identified by some respondents to be in need of improvement. Consistency of academic information provided to students was also considered to be very important in determining the effectiveness of the academic advising delivery system. The relative availability and knowledge of faculty members as academic advisors received numerous mentions. Selection of faculty advisors using appropriate criteria such as knowledge, skill, and willingness to advise were identified as contributing to the effective delivery of academic advising. The issue of the sometimes high turnover rate of faculty members as academic advisors was also raised by respondents.

Delivery models in use, in addition to the prevalent individual advising model, were discussed by respondents in terms of their effectiveness. The academic calendar, as a method of self-advising, was mentioned by several respondents as being in need of improvement. The strengths and weaknesses of the computer-assisted advising, advisor-led group advising, peer-led group advising, and course advising occurring in the three faculties were also mentioned by academic advisors. Evaluation of academic advising was reported to be lacking and there was some recognition among the respondents of the value of having students evaluate the service.

The chapter concluded with a presentation of suggestions made by respondents for actions that the faculties or the university could take that would improve academic advising.

Chapter 7

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the major findings, a discussion of their relationship to other research, and resulting recommendations for practice and future research.

Overview of Study

Academic advising of undergraduate students is an important service provided by higher education institutions. Grites (1979) recognized that each higher education student has unique educational needs and aspirations and that academic advising can assist higher education students in maximizing the educational benefits available to them. The major purpose of this study was to provide a detailed description of the organization and delivery of academic advising of undergraduate students in selected faculties at the University of Alberta. Another purpose was to obtain perceptions of effectiveness of the various structures and models in use.

Qualitative research methods were used to obtain information relative to the research questions. Data were collected from two sources: (a) open-ended interviews with 21 individuals involved with academic advising in three faculties at the University of Alberta and (b) an examination of pertinent faculty and university documents. The faculties studied were the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics; the Faculty of Education; and the Faculty of Science. These faculties were chosen based on their use of diverse organizational structures and delivery models for academic advising. A stratified sampling technique was used in this study as the organization and delivery of academic advising in each faculty

required different numbers of interviews and types of advisors interviewed. Interviews were conducted, audio-recorded, transcribed, and analyzed by the researcher. Comments of each of the respondents were grouped using a content analysis coding technique. In addition, pertinent documents were examined in order to gain a greater understanding of the context and procedures in use.

Findings

Academic advisors were asked to respond to interview questions that addressed the four main research problems in the study: (a) the objectives of academic advising, (b) the organization of academic advising, (c) the delivery of academic advising, and (d) the effectiveness of academic advising. The findings for each of these topics are summarized and discussed in this section.

Objectives of Academic Advising

There was general agreement between respondents in the three faculties studied regarding the objectives of providing academic advising services to undergraduate students. These numerous objectives ranged from the provision of specific academic information to the creation of a supportive learning environment.

Organization of Academic Advising

The organization of academic advising was similar in the three faculties studied. Each faculty housed its own academic advising system and relied on both non-academic staff in a centralized academic advising office and faculty members in the departments to provide academic advising to undergraduate students. However, a more detailed examination revealed differences in the way these structures functioned as a source of academic advice for students.

The Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics coordinated its faculty members who were academic advisors using six "Program Committees," one for each degree program offered. Each committee held responsibility for the academic advising of students in its degree program as well as responsibility for

other aspects relating to that particular degree. Faculty members who were considered to have relevant expertise and talent for academic advising were appointed to these committees. This coordination of faculty advisors crossed departmental boundaries and was unique to the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics.

The centralized academic advising office in the Faculty of Education was the primary source of academic advice for students in that faculty. Within this office, academic advice was available from non-academic staff, and to a lesser degree, from academic administrators. Although faculty members were designated as advisors in the departments, their services were coordinated at the department level and, not at the faculty level as in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics.

The Faculty of Science had two academic advising organizational structures. General degree students were considered to be the advising responsibility of the centralized academic advising office, while specialization and honors students could obtain advice from both the academic advising office and faculty members in the departments. Coordination of faculty advisors for specialization and honors students, which occurred in the departments, varied considerably across departments.

Organizational context of the faculties studied was considered to exert influence on the organization of academic advising. In each faculty studied an amalgamation of either faculties or departments had occurred, old and new curricula were operating concurrently, and recent financial restraint had affected academic advising in some way. Other aspects of organizational context such as complexity of program offerings and the number of students in programs were also thought by respondents to determine the organization of academic advising to some extent.

Delivery of Academic Advising

Respondents in each of the faculties studied stated that "individual academic advising," that is, the in-person exchange of academic information between a student and an academic advisor, was the primary academic advising delivery system in use. Academic advisors were found to occupy a variety of institutional roles and had different areas of expertise. In general, the non-academic staff were considered to be best able to provide information about admission, degree requirements, faculty and institutional policies, and availability of other student services. Faculty members were generally considered to be best able to provide information about course content, program electives, program design, and career paths. Personal counselling needs of students were occasionally presented to academic advisors, but only in the Faculty of Education was an academic advisor specifically identified as being qualified to provide that type of assistance to students.

The availability of academic advising services was communicated to students in formal and informal ways. Formal communications to students were reported to take the form of (a) statements made in the university calendar, (b) faculty or department documents distributed to students at the time of admission and/or registration, and (c) information posted on bulletin boards. The "student grapevine" was thought to be a significant informal communication system by several of the respondents. Some were concerned about the accuracy and objectivity of the information exchanged between students, while other respondents considered it to be beneficial for students to talk to one another about academic concerns.

Access to academic advisors by students was found to occur either by drop-in or by appointment. The centralized academic advising offices in the Faculties of Education and Science both used a drop-in system, and only in special

circumstances made appointments for students to see advisors in those offices. The Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics used an appointment system in its centralized academic advising office. Some faculty members who were academic advisors reported the use of either drop-in academic advising at all times or at designated times only, some made exclusive use of an appointment system, while still others used a combination of the two.

Students experiencing academic difficulty were sometimes required to see academic advisors regularly or utilize some other service as conditions of their academic probation. Academic advisors reported that occasionally students would approach them on their own for advice on improving their academic standing. In the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics, when students said that personal circumstances beyond their control had affected their academic standing negatively, academic advisors could be asked to provide any knowledge they had of the students' circumstances.

Respondents revealed personal approaches to academic advising in their discussions of delivery. There were notable differences between the faculties regarding the extent to which academic advisors considered themselves to be responsible for the academic programs of students. The Faculty of Education took the most proactive approach to ensuring smooth operation of students' programs, while the Faculty of Science placed the greatest responsibility on its students for their programs. Academic advisors from every faculty discussed the importance of positive advisor-student relationships as well as the importance of facilitating students' access to other information sources and student services on campus.

The "self-advising" that occurred when students read the academic calendar or other academic information provided to them by the university was recognized as another delivery model in use in each of the three faculties. In some cases, the faculty or department had developed information sheets or pamphlets specific to

their programs to provide a less complex document for students to refer to for information.

Additional delivery models were in use in the faculties studied. A computer-assisted advising system was employed in the Faculty of Education and in the Faculty of Science but was considered to be of limited value. The Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics required new students to complete an orientation course in the fall term of their first year. In the Faculty of Education, advisor-led group advising sessions had been attempted while a voluntary, peer-led group advising program for first-year students was in use in the Faculty of Science.

Effectiveness of Academic Advising

The effectiveness of academic advising was addressed in terms of the organization of academic advising, the delivery of academic advising, and suggestions for ways to improve academic advising. Respondents were in agreement that academic advising was most appropriately organized at the faculty level rather than the institutional level.

The effectiveness of several aspects of the delivery of academic advising were discussed. The merits of drop-in and appointment access to academic advisors were provided by respondents. Concerns about students receiving the "run-around" or discourteous treatment by university personnel were raised. The consistency of academic information delivered to students was widely considered to be important by respondents.

Faculty members who were academic advisors were reported to possess more specific information on programs and careers than did non-academic staff members who were academic advisors. However, faculty were acknowledged to be less available and accessible for students seeking academic advice than were non-academic staff in centralized academic advising offices. Concerns for the potentially high turnover of faculty advisors were raised.

The effectiveness of the additional delivery models in use in the three faculties were also discussed. While several respondents indicated that the university's calendar had improved in its readability, as a form of self-advising, it was generally considered to be a poor communicator of academic information. A computer-assisted advising system in two faculties was identified as being of limited usefulness to students. Peer-led group advising and course advising were in use in two faculties with reported success, while advisor-led group advising sessions were offered in another with poor attendance by students.

Suggestions were made by respondents for ways in which academic advising could be improved at both the faculty level and the university level. These included wider and improved use of additional delivery models, increased training and learning opportunities for academic advisors, increased communication between academic advisors, improved courtesy shown to students by academic advisors, and improved consistency of academic information provided by academic advisors.

Discussion

While many of the findings of this study were supported in the literature, some were not addressed. Additionally, among the faculties studied, examples of the characteristics of effective academic advising or of a developmental approach to academic advising identified in the literature were limited.

As Habley (1983) and Hines (1984) discussed, the organizational context in which academic advising occurs was found to have an influence on its organization. Academic advising is a faculty responsibility at the University of Alberta, that is, it is decentralized in its organization. This finding corresponds with the findings of Habley and McAuley (1987) that the broader the scope of program offerings and the greater the number of students enrolled, the more decentralized the organization of academic advising. This relationship between

context and organization was also apparent in the faculties studied. The Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics had the smallest enrollment and the most centrally coordinated academic advising system, while the Faculty of Science had the largest enrollment and the most decentralized organization of academic advising.

Habley (1983) described seven organizational models for academic advising. At the institutional level, the "satellite" model best described the organization of academic advising. That is, the "academic sub-units," or in this study, the faculties, organized and delivered academic advising services. Other Habley models have some application at the faculty level. The organization of academic advising in the Faculty of Education is best described as a "dual advising" model where responsibility for advising students was shared between non-academic staff in a centralized advising office and faculty members in the departments. Similarly, a dual advising model was in use within the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics, but faculty who were academic advisors were determined as such based on the degree program, not the department. The organization of academic advising in the Faculty of Science is best described by the "split advising" model. General degree program students, rather than "undecided students," were advised at a centralized office, while specialization and honors students were primarily advised by faculty members in the departments.

Aspects presented in the literature relating to the delivery of academic advising were found in this study. Five delivery models for academic advising were described by Gordon (1992) and each was found to exist to some degree in the faculties studied at the University of Alberta. Individual advising was the prevalent delivery model in use, which was consistent with the findings of Habley, Crockett, and Cowart (1987). Faculty and non-academic staff were the main sources of individual advising in the faculties studied. A peer-led group advising

system that used upper-year students as academic advisors was employed in one faculty whereas a faculty member who was also a chartered psychologist was an academic advisor specifically for students in personal or academic difficulty in another. Paraprofessional advisors, as described by King (1988), were not reported to deliver academic advising services in the faculties studied. The strengths and weaknesses of faculty, non-academic staff, and students as the providers of academic advice were reported by respondents in this study. These corresponded with those provided in King's (1988) matrix of the relative strengths and weaknesses of academic advisors provided in Table 2.2 of this thesis. Self-advising in the form of the university's academic calendar was available to all students as another source of academic information. Advisor-led group advising, computer-assisted advising, and course advising were also employed by faculties in this study.

Special mention of the role of the "student grapevine" in communicating academic information and the availability of academic advising to students was provided by many respondents. While this was widely considered to be an important aspect of the delivery of academic advising, it was not identified in the literature. This absence in the literature suggests that the role of the student grapevine in the delivery of academic advising is a relatively unexplored topic.

The faculties studied exhibited few of the characteristics of effective academic advising programs as identified by Grites (1979). The recommendation that a thorough assessment be conducted, that there be an advisor evaluation scheme, that the total advising program be reviewed every five years, and that research aimed at improving academic advising services be conducted did not occur in the faculties studied. This was consistent with the findings of Habley, Crockett, and Cowart (1987) regarding the low incidence of systematic evaluation of academic advising in institutions in the United States. On an individual basis, non-

academic staff received evaluation of their academic advising activities as part of their annual performance review. Only in one faculty did a faculty advisor indicate that faculty member performance as academic advisors was considered in their annual evaluation. No incentives or rewards beyond such general performance evaluation were identified to be in place, although their existence was also recommended by Grites.

The recommendation that a single individual assume the primary responsibility to coordinate academic advising was only reported in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics where the Associate Dean (Academic Programs) was responsible for the centralized academic advising and the appointment of the Program Committees whose members were faculty advisors. In the two remaining faculties, academic administrators with responsibility for the academic advising in centralized offices were not responsible for coordination of academic advising by faculty members.

The faculties studied did not report use of a formalized advisor selection process as recommended by Grites (1979). Consultation with knowledgeable people did assist academic administrators in selecting advisors and the qualifications considered to be important were consistent with the literature (e.g., Council for the Advancement of Standards for Student Services/Developmental Programs, 1986). Habley, Crockett, and Cowart (1987) had also found that strategies for faculty selection and participation in the advising process were either nonexistent or poorly conceived and delivered.

Training programs were organized annually in each of the faculties, but they focused on informational items rather than the advising process or on student development. This was not consistent with Grites' (1979) recommendation that these programs be comprehensive and on-going. Neither were these training

programs consistent with the objectives of academic advising training programs provided by Grites in 1978.

Crookston (1972) had pointed out that academic advising could be "prescriptive" or "developmental." Academic advising was widely considered by respondents in this study to be an exchange of information more than a growth activity for students. The concept of "developmental academic advising" has received much attention in recent literature on academic advising, but examples of that approach were limited in the faculties included in this study. The use of an academic administrator who was a chartered psychologist in the Faculty of Education came closest to a developmental approach, however, her services were intended only for students experiencing academic or personal difficulty. Both faculty members and non-academic staff who were academic advisors reported advising students on career paths as well as referring students to other services on campus. However, generally the academic advising process in this study was informational rather than developmental.

Recommendations for Practice

The practical implications of the findings of this study for academic advising are presented below.

1. Universities, including the University of Alberta, should increase their use of a developmental approach to academic advising rather than the primarily prescriptive approach evidenced in this study.

2. The University of Alberta should develop a statement regarding the provision of academic advising for undergraduate students. It should identify where responsibility for the services lies and what the expectations of the university are for the quality of this service.

3. The centralized academic advising offices in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics and the Faculty of Science should consider an

extension of their hours to include the noon hour in the Winter Session. It is likely that it is at noon hour when the most students are on campus but are not in classes, making it a prime opportunity for them to obtain access to services such as academic advising. Arrangements for staggered lunch breaks would allow this improved accessibility.

4. Increased and improved training programs for academic advising which provide not only accurate academic information but also information on being an effective academic advisor should be implemented.

5. Attention should be given to the additional academic advising delivery models in use in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics (course advising) and Faculty of Science (peer-led group advising). These models and others could be adapted and modified to suit the organizational context and student body of other faculties at the University of Alberta.

6. The Faculty of Science should revisit its academic advising structure where honors and specialization degree students, who have the most prescribed curricula and therefore the fewest program choices, have the greatest access to academic advice. Meanwhile general degree students, for whom the curricular choices are greatest, have the least access to academic advising.

7. The Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Science should give consideration to a centrally coordinated academic advising committee structure for faculty advisors such as the "Program Committee" structure in use in the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics.

8. The Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Science should produce a similar academic advising services information sheet for students as that provided by the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics. (See Appendix H)

Recommendations for Research

Recommendations for future research on academic advising result from the findings of this study are presented below.

1. The present study should be replicated in the remaining faculties at the University of Alberta to obtain a clear understanding of the organization and delivery of academic advising on campus. For economy, the sample from each faculty could be decreased in size to three or four per faculty. It would be important to include the following people in the sample from each faculty: (a) an academic administrator with responsibility for academic advising services in the faculty, (b) a non-academic staff member who provides academic advising, and (c) a faculty member who provides academic advising.

2. Academic advising at universities, including the University of Alberta, should undergo a specific, comprehensive, and formative evaluation of its effectiveness. It is recommended that such an evaluation be specific to each faculty. Development of evaluation instruments could suitably draw on research conducted on the organization and delivery of academic advising in each faculty as suggested in Recommendation #1. It is considered most appropriate that undergraduate students constitute the sample in such an evaluation as they are the recipients of the service.

3. The great majority of literature on the organization and delivery of academic advising is from the United States and is representative of smaller institutions than are typical of western Canada. Studies of the organizational structures and delivery systems in use in Canadian universities, and assessment of their effectiveness by students, would be a valuable addition to the knowledge in this field.

4. Research on student preferences for non-academic versus academic staff as advisors would be beneficial. Likewise, research regarding student preferences for drop-in versus appointment access to academic advice would also be of value.

Concluding Comment

The undergraduate experience presents many challenges for students, both academically and otherwise. A new environment for many people, universities are large, complex, and often impersonal organizations that may overwhelm undergraduates. Students have the right to expect academic information and advice to be available and accessible at the institutions in which they are enrolled. Although academic calendars provide a great amount of information, a substitute does not exist for communication with an informed and dedicated academic advisor capable of answering questions and helping students to address other concerns.

Academic advising, as defined in this study, is one of the most relevant of the student services available at the University of Alberta as it has the potential to be of benefit to every student. Despite the lack of formal direction at the institutional level, the faculties in this study took the responsibility to provide this service seriously. While the organization and delivery of academic advising can always be improved, the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics, the Faculty of Education, and the Faculty of Science at the University of Alberta are to be commended on the attention given to the academic advising needs of their undergraduate students.

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APPENDIX A

Sample of Letter Sent to Interview Respondents

<date>

Dear <respondent's name>,

I am a graduate student in the Department of Educational Policy studies conducting research in the area of academic advising. Your name has been provided to me by <name of contact person in faculty> as an individual knowledgeable of academic advising services within the Faculty of <X>.

The purpose of my research is to provide a detailed description of procedures used in undergraduate academic advising in selected faculties at the University of Alberta. The Faculty of <X> is one of the faculties in the sample. Data collection will occur, in part, through 30 minute, taped interviews with individuals involved in the delivery of academic advising services in each of the selected faculties.

I would greatly appreciate it if you would be willing to be interviewed regarding your role in academic advising. I have attached the interview schedule only to familiarize you with the nature of the questions to be asked and not because any preparation is required on your part. At any time prior to, during or after the interview, you may tell me not to use part or all of the information which you have provided. Your wishes will be strictly honored. Your name will not be used in the transcription of the interview or in any written report, including the thesis.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions at 436-9855, through e-mail at sbens@gpu.srv.ualberta.ca, or through campus mail in care of the Department of Educational Policy Studies. I will be in contact with you again <time frame>.

Sincerely,

Susan L. Bens
Graduate Student
Department of Educational Policy Studies

APPENDIX B

Interview Schedule for Faculty and Non-academic Staff Academic Advisors

Interview Schedule for Faculty and Non-academic Staff Academic Advisors

Reminders:

Please be aware before we begin that if at any time you would like to stop the interview you may. Also, please contact me if you later feel that you need to clarify a point or do not want me to use parts of the interview or the entire interview in my research. Your participation in this research will be kept confidential and your name will not be used. Your wishes will be honored regarding any of the data that you provide.

1. What is your position title?

2. What is your understanding of the objectives of academic advising in this department/faculty?

3. What are your responsibilities for undergraduate academic advising?

4. Who performs undergraduate academic advising in this department/faculty? (position title)

5. Who assigns academic advising responsibilities? (position title)

6. How do students access academic advising services?

7. What are the main types of advice that students seek from advisors?

8. What different types of academic advice are provided by different advisors?

9. Are different processes or procedures employed in the case of students experiencing academic difficulty?

10. (a) In what physical location does most advising occur?
    (b) At what time of year does most advising occur?

11. What training or support do advisors receive for advising activities?

12. (a) How could your current academic advising system be improved?
    (b) What barriers exist to making these improvements?

13. What could the university do to improve undergraduate academic advising services?

14. Is there anything else you would like to add regarding academic advising that I have not asked about during this interview?

15. May I contact you if I need clarification or have further questions?

APPENDIX C

Interview Schedule for Faculty of Science "Cohort Mentors"

Interview Schedule for Faculty of Science "Cohort Mentors"

Reminders:

Please be aware before we begin that if at any time you would like to stop the interview you may. Also, please contact me if you later feel that you need to clarify a point or do not want me to use parts of the interview or the entire interview in my research. Your participation in this research will be kept confidential and your name will not be used. Your wishes will be honored regarding any of the data that you provide.

1. How did you become involved as a Cohort Mentor?

2. What do you see as the major purpose(s) of advising provided by Cohort Mentors?

3. What are your responsibilities for undergraduate academic advising?

4. How were the students assigned to you?

5. How many students were you assigned?

6. (a) How was the first contact with students made?
   (b) Who initiated further contact?
   (c) How often did you meet?
   (d) How long were meetings?
   (e) Can you describe a typical interaction?

7. (a) In what physical location did most advising occur?
   (b) At what times of year did most advising occur?

8. (a) What are the main types of advice that students sought from you?
   (b) Have you referred any students to others for further advice?

9. What training or support did you receive for your advising activities?

10. (a) How could the Cohort Mentor system be improved?
    (b) How could the current academic advising system in your faculty as a whole be improved? (You may want to reflect on your own experiences as a student.)

11. Is there anything else you would like to add regarding the Cohort Mentor System or academic advising in general that I have not asked about during this interview?

12. May I contact you if I need clarification or have further questions?

APPENDIX D

Data Analysis Coding Key Used

Coding Frame/Research Question	Criteria of Selection
1. What are the objectives of academic advising?	a) statements of purpose, function, or objectives of academic advising
2. How is academic advising organized?	(a) nature of program offerings (b) nature of student body (c) organizational changes affecting academic advising (d) organization of centralized academic advising offices (e) organization of academic advising by faculty members (f) types of students accessing advising sources
3. How is academic advising delivered?	(a) institutional role of academic advisors (b) expertise of academic advisors (c) training of academic advisors (d) communication to students regarding the availability of academic advising (e) accessing academic advising services by students (f) availability of academic advising (g) academic advising for students in academic difficulty (h) personal approaches of academic advisors to advising (i) self-advising (j) computer-assisted advising (k) group advising (l) course advising
4. What are the perceptions of the effectiveness of academic advising?	(a) effectiveness of the organization of academic advising (b) effectiveness of the delivery of academic advising (c) improvements that could be made at the faculty level (d) improvements that could be made at the university level

APPENDIX E

Academic Advising Statement for the Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics as Presented in the University of Alberta 1995-96 Calendar (p. 100)

32.6 Student Advisory Services

Undergraduate students seeking advice on academic matters should do the following:

1. For answers to general questions about careers, course content, fields of specialization, and preparation for graduate study, students should consult with a Program Advisor. A list of Program Advisors is available at the Faculty's Student Services Office in Room 2-10 of the Agriculture/Forestry Centre.
2. For information regarding Faculty regulations on admission, readmission, program requirements, transfer, course registration, withdrawal, and graduation requirements, students are directed to the Faculty's Student Services Office in Room 2-10 of the Agriculture/Forestry Centre.
3. Students who are encountering special difficulties related to their programs, or to Faculty decisions, and students with a problem of an individual nature, should contact the Associate Dean (Academic Programs), whose office is in Room 2-10 of the Agriculture/Forestry Centre.

APPENDIX F

Academic Advising Statement for the Faculty of Education

as Presented in the University of Alberta 1995-96 Calendar (pp. 170-171)

72.4 Student Advising

Undergraduate Student Services

Staff will provide assistance in matters related to admission, readmission, program requirements, field experience, and similar matters related to student's program.

This office maintains the Faculty record of each student's academic program as well as the student teaching reports.

Most queries will be handled by the staff in the Undergraduate Student Services Office but when necessary, students will be referred to the appropriate university unit for resolution.

Associate Dean (Undergraduate Student Services)

The Associate Dean is responsible for the overall administration of all matters related to the undergraduate program, and has responsibility for liaison with the colleges and other university matters. The Associate Dean works with the Registrar's Office, other Faculties and Departments, the Assistant Dean (Field Experiences), the Assistant Dean (Admissions), and the Assistant Dean (Student Services) on program related concerns and any problems arising during the administration of Faculty policies and regulations.

Assistant Dean (Admissions)

Applicants who require extra information related to admission to undergraduate programs should consult with the Assistant Dean (Admissions), as should students who wish to stop out.

Assistant Dean (Student Services)

Students who are encountering special difficulties are advised to make an appointment with the Assistant Dean (Student Services) who assists students having problems related to program planning or other problems of an individual

nature. Students are required to obtain approval for certain special requests and are required to consult with the Assistant Dean before submitting a formal appeal to the Faculty Academic Appeals Committee.

Assistant Dean (Field Experiences)

The Assistant Dean (Field Experiences) is responsible for all matters related to student teaching, including arranging for Coordinators to provide students with information about field experience programs and counsel them on matters relating to student teaching. Field Experiences staff also arrange for cooperating teachers, university facilitators, and faculty consultants who work with the student on a regular basis throughout the student teaching rounds.

Professors of the Faculty

Professors of the Faculty offer advice on academic matters related to fields of study within education or preparation for graduate study. Students are encouraged to consult with professors in the Faculty departments for information about specific courses, discussion of program alternatives, or other academic or professional concerns.

Employment with Separate School Boards

Students planning to seek employment in Catholic Schools in the Province are advised to consult early in their program with St. Joseph's College concerning the inclusion of courses in Christian Religious Education, Theology, and Philosophy in their program of study.

APPENDIX G

Course Selection Statement for the Faculty of Science

as Presented in the University of Alberta 1995-96 Calendar (p. 281)

182.8 Courses

1. Selection of Courses

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with program requirements and limitations are specified in the Calendar, for ensuring their programs are properly planned in accordance with degree specifications, and for the completeness and accuracy of their registration. Please read the Calendar carefully before registering in your courses, and if you are in doubt about any regulations pertaining to your program, consult the Faculty of Science Office (CW 223 Biological Sciences) for clarification.

APPENDIX H

Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics

Undergraduate Academic Advising Information Sheet

Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics

WHO TO TALK TO WHEN YOU NEED ASSISTANCE

General Enquiries: 492-4933

STUDENT SERVICE COORDINATORS

What They Do:

- Process applications to degree programs -- admission policies, procedures, deadlines, requirements, transfer credit assessment, status of applications.
- Advise on University/Faculty policies and procedures.
- Approve the following forms:
  - -"Courses to be Added/Deleted"
  - -"Withdrawal"
  - -"Application for Degree"
  - -"Change of Personal Information or Program Data"
  - -"Student Record Update"
  - -"Non-Standard Course Load" (first approved by Program Advisor, then by Student Service Coordinator)
  - -"Visiting Student" (for student to attend another institution and have the courses credited toward degree program here)
- Provide information to students in academic difficulty.
- Provide information on deferred exams, reexaminations and reappraisals.
- Determine if students have met degree requirements for graduation.

Who They Are:

Student Surnames beginning with A-La:	Dawn Bissett	210 Ag/Forestry 492-4586
Student Surnames beginning with Le-Z:	Iva Spence	210 Ag/Forestry 492-5547

THE DEPARTMENT OFFERING THE COURSE

What They Do:

- Approve waivers for course prerequisites/corequisites.
- Assist students enrolling in restricted courses.
- Provide information on course sections full/new section availability.
- Provide information on instructors.

ACADEMIC ADVISORS

What They Do:

- Provide information on programs and course content.
- Suggest courses which will enhance a student's particular area of interest/career aspiration.
- Recommend the following:
  - -course substitutions in programs (on a "Course Recommendation" form)
  - -program electives (on a "Course Recommendation" form)
  - -increase in number of term courses (on a "Non-Standard Course Load" form)
  - -visiting student status (on a "Visiting Student" form)
- Provide information on professional accreditation (for example; PAg, RPF, CDA, PHEC).
- Provide career counselling.

Who They Are:

<u>BSc AGRICULTURE****(New Programs Commencing January 1993)****(AG 20)</u>

General Information		
Peter Crown	440 ESB	492-2886
Noorallah Juma	338A ESB	492-6426
Agricultural Sciences Major		
Peter Crown	440 ESB	492-2886
Noorallah Juma	338A ESB	492-6426
Animal Science Major		
Frank Robinson	318H Ag/Forestry	492-3234
John Feddes	310J Ag/Forestry	492-0105
Applied Economics Major		
Len Bauer	501 GSB	492-4178
Crop Science Major		
Rick Knowles	416D Ag/Forestry	492-2328
Bill Vanden Born	416C Ag/Forestry	
Land Resource Science Major		
Peter Crown	440 ESB	492-2886
Noorallah Juma	338 ESB	492-6426
Pre-Veterinary Medicine		
Frank Robinson	318H Ag/Forestry	492-3234
John Feddes	310J Ag/Forestry	492-0105

<u>BSc AGRICULTURE****(Old Programs Prior to January 1993)****(AG 01)</u>

Agricultural Economics & Rural Economy Specializations		
Len Bauer	501 GSB	492-4178

BSc AGRICULTURE**(Old Programs Prior to January 1993)****(AG 01) CONT.**

Agronomy Specialization		
Peter Crown	440 ESB	492-2886
Bill Vanden Born	416C Ag/Forestry	492-2947
Animal Science & Dairy Science Specializations		
Frank Robinson	318H Ag/Forestry	492-3234
John Feddes	310J Ag/Forestry	492-0105
General Program		
Peter Crown	440 ESB	492-2886
Bill Vanden Born	416C Ag/Forestry	492-2947
Plant Science, Plant Protection & Grazing Management		
Rick Knowles	416D Ag/Forestry	492-2328
Bill Vanden Born	416C Ag/Forestry	492-2947
Soil Science Specialization		
Peter Crown	440 ESB	492-2886

BSc AGRICULTURAL/FOOD BUSINESS MANAGEMENT (AG 22) & (AG 08)

Scott Jeffrey	531 GSB	492-5470
Paul Jelen	206G Ag/Forestry	492-2480
Frank Novak	523 GSB	492-4711

BSc ENVIRONMENTAL & CONSERVATION SCIENCES (AG 23)

Conservation Biology & Management		
Jim Butler	861 GSB	492-2819
Ellen Macdonald	863 GSB	492-3070
Environmental Economics & Policy		
Terry Veeman	509 GSB	492-0818
Vic Adamowicz	527 GSB	492-4603
Land Remediation, Reclamation & Conservation		
Marvin Dudas	334A ESB	492-6472
Anne Naeth	865 GSB	492-9539
Wildlife & Rangeland Resources Management		
Art Bailey	416F Ag/Forestry	492-5338
Bob Hudson	855C GSB	492-2111
Independent Concentration		
All ENCS Academic Advisors		

BSc FORESTRY (AG 21) & (AG 05)

Jim Beck	807 GSB	492-2356
Peter Blenis	751 GSB	492-0106
Marty Luckert	549 GSB	492-5002
Paul Woodard	845 GSB	492-2924
Janusz Zwiazek	847 GSB	492-2358

BSc HUMAN ECOLOGY (HE 24)

Textiles, Clothing and Culture		
Sandra Niessen	223C Home Ec	492-5686
Nancy Kerr	301A Printing Serv	492-7679
Family Studies		
Janet Fast	327 Assiniboia Hall	492-5768
Jason Montgomery	370 Assiniboia Hall	492-5767
Mary Anne Poirier	355 Assiniboia Hall	492-3922
Consumer Studies		
Janet Fast	327 Assiniboia Hall	492-5768

BSc NUTRITION & FOOD SCIENCES**(New Program)****(AG 25)**

Food Science and Technology		
Buncha Ooraikul	206D Ag/Forestry	492-3268
Foods and Nutrition		
Vicki Baracos	318G Ag/Forestry	492-7664
Eileen LeBlanc	206E Ag/Forestry	492-5362
Gary Mathison	318C Ag/Forestry	492-7666
Tapan Basu	318B Ag/Forestry	492-4921
Nutrition		
Vicki Baracos	318G Ag/Forestry	492-7664
Gary Mathison	318C Ag/Forestry	492-7666

BSc HOME ECONOMICS*(Old Program)****(HE 62)**

Foods and Nutrition		
Vicki Baracos	318G Ag/Forestry	492-7664
Eileen LeBlanc	206E Ag/Forestry	492-5362
Tapan Basu	318B Ag/Forestry	492-4921

BSc FOOD SCIENCE**(Old Program Prior to January 1993)****(AG 02)**

All Nutrition & Food Science Academic Advisors

APPENDIX I

Faculty of Science Honors and Specialization Student

Academic Advising Information Sheet

November/94

1994-95

SPECIALIZATION & HONORS PROGRAM ADVISORS

PROGRAMS				
Biochemistry	Dr. B. Hodges Coordinator	(H & S)	321A Med Sci	492- 2758
	Dr. M.N.G. James		425 C Med Sci	4550
	Dr. B. Sykes		419B Med Sci	5460
	Dr. V. Paetkau		460 Med Sci	3593
	Dr. B. Ryan		315HR Med Sci	5153
	Dr. D. Scraba		455A Med Sci	5220
	Dr. R. McElhaney		343A Med Sci	2413
	Dr. C. Cass		561A Med Sci	2139
	Dr. D. Morgan		416A Med Sci	2417
	Dr. D. Vance		320H Med Sci	8286
	Dr. W. Wolodko		451 Med Sci	2419
Biological Science	Dr. M. Dale		B414 Bio Sci	0076
Botany	Dr. M. Hickman	(H &S)	B330 Bio Sci	5615
	Dr. S.E. Bayley		B322 Bio Sci	4615
Chemistry	Dr. R.E.D. McClung		E3-44 Chem	3254
Computing Science	Mrs. S. Gannon		611 General Services	5189
	Dr. R. Goebel		621 General Services	2683
Entomology	Dr. B.K. Mitchell		214 Earth Scienc	4637
Environmental Biol.	Dr. J. Addicott		Z1110 Bio Sci	2373
Genetics	Dr. J.B. Bell	4th Year	G511A Bio Sci	5382
	Dr. R.B. Locke	3rd Year	G519A Bio Sci	2193
	Dr. D. B. Pilgrim	2nd Year	G507A Bio Sci	2792
	Dr. A.G. Good	1st Year	G425B Bio Sci	1905
Geography	Dr. B. Rains Physical/Cartography		3-127 Tory	0350
	Dr. G. Reuter Meteorology		2-96 Tory	0358
Geology	Dr. T. Chacko	A-L	1-03 Earth Science	5751
	Dr. R.D. Morton	M-Z	3-11 Earth Science	5395
	Dr. P. Erdmer Undergrad Transfers		4-02 Earth Science	2676
	Dr. P. Erdmer Graduands		4-02 Earth Science	2676
	Dr. R.C. Fox Honors Paleontology		Z428 Bio Sci	5491
Mathematics	Dr. B. Allison	Spec	665 CAB	3001
	Dr.N. Al-Salam	Spec	635 CAB	0573
	Dr. K.F. Anderson	Spec	569 CAB	0571
	Dr. C. Hoo	Spec	583 CAB	3460
	Dr. E. Gombay	Spec	423 CAB	2337
	Dr. R.J. Karunamuni	Spec	443 CAB	5812
	Dr. M. Kovalyov	Spec	541 CAB	2667
	Dr. A. Pianzola	Spec	621 CAB	3525
	Dr. W.S. Young	Spec	573 CAB	5737
	DR. J.D. Lewis	Hon	623 CAB	0217
	Dr. G. Peschke	Hon	543 CAB	0565
	Dr. S. Shen	Hon	535 CAB	0216
	Dr. N.G.N. Prasad	Hon	439 CAB	5733
	Dr. J.W.H. So	Hon	577 CAB	0570
	Dr. V. Zizler	Hon	627 CAB	2704
Microbiology	Dr. G. Stemke	See the General		3308
	Dr. P.M. Fedorak	Biological Science Centre		
	Dr. K. Roy Cell Biotechnology	CW405 Bio Sci		
Pharmacology	Dr. J. Elbrink (8:30-11:30am)		9-09 Med Sci	5711/3575
Physiology	Dr. A. French		7-14Med Sci	3326
Physics	Janet Couch		415 Physics	1070
Psychology	Sandy Block	Spec	P206D Bio Sci	2970
	Dr. C. Varnhagen	Honors	P439 Bio Sci	0970
	Dr.C. Hoffman (for students wishing to transfer to Honors)		P349 Bio Sci	4717
Zoology	Dr. R. Kaufman	Spec	Z606 Bio Sci	1279
	Dr. J. Nelson	Hon	Z1012 Bio Sci	4741

APPENDIX J

Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics

"University 100" Course Outline and Course Schedule

UNIVERSITY 100

ORIENTATION

Coordinator: Dr. D.S. Chanasyk
Associate Dean (Academic Programs)
Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Home Economics
Rm 2-19B AgFor Centre

Course Philosophy

First year students succeed in their university programs when they make progress toward fulfilling their educational and personal goals by:

1. developing academic and intellectual competence,
2. developing a personal and professional identity,
3. developing an integrated philosophy of life,
4. maintaining personal health and wellness,
5. establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships, and
6. deciding on a career and lifestyle.

Specific interactions, both inside and outside the classroom, are known to bring increased student satisfaction, personal growth, academic achievement and reduced student withdrawals.

Course Goals

1. To develop a feeling of "belongingness" to the Faculty and the University of Alberta.
2. To provide students with learning experiences to obtain knowledge and practical skills that will enable them to succeed in university.
3. To develop a familiarity, and foster user comfort, with services on campus.
4. To develop and further awareness of the need to take responsibility as a student.
5. To foster self confidence and self esteem in the learning environment.

Course Requirements
Note: All students enrolled in the faculty after September 1993 must have credit in Univ 100 to graduate.

1. Regular attendance, which will be monitored
   (Excusable absence forms must be completed for missed classes within two class periods of missed classes, with appropriate accompanying documentation. Obtain them from the instructor).
   Students must attend at least three presentations on Peer Health Education

2. Viewing of university library video and submission of pink attendance slip to the instructor.

Course Grading: credit basis (i.e. either C for credit or F for failure; it does not enter into GPA)

Required Text: University of Alberta Calendar 1994/95

UNIVERSITY 100

MONDAY, WEDNESDAY AND FRIDAY
0800, 1000 AND 1500 H CLASSES
1994 COURSE SCHEDULE

September 9	Welcome and introduction
September 12	Student Questions/Needs
September 14	Student Clubs
September 16	Student Clubs
September 19	Library (Meet in Room 1-20F in the Cameron Library)
September 21	No UNIV 100 classes (free period)
September 23	No UNIV 100 classes (free period)
September 26	Career Planning
September 28	Career Planning
September 30	Career Planning
October 3	Library CD ROM for 0800 and 1500 h classes: Meet in Room 1-20F in the Cameron Library) (no 1000 h class in UNIV 100)
October 5	Library CD ROM for 1000 h class Meet in Room 1-20F in the Cameron Library (no 0800 and 1500 h classes in UNIV100)
October 7	No UNIV 100 classes (free period)
October 10	No university classes (Thanksgiving)
October 12	Peer Health Education
October 14	Peer Health Education
October 17	No UNIV 100 classes (free period)
October 19	Peer Health Education
October 21	Peer Health Education
October 24	Course Review and Evaluation
October 26	No UNIV 100 classes: midterm week
October 28	No UNIV 100 classes: midterm week
October 31	Study skills
November 2	Study skills
November 4	Study skills
November 7	Time/Money/Stress Management
November 9	Time/Money/Stress Management
November 11	No university classes (Remembrance Day)
November 14	Program Regulations; Program Committees
November 16	A Day in the Life of a University Professor
November 18	No UNIV 100 classes (free period)
November 21	Course Evaluation
We're Done!!!	